Women and Monasticism in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Decoding a Cultural Map

DIGITAL EDITING / PAGE LAYOUT & COVER EDITING
Eirini Kalogridou

© 2019, INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
NATIONAL HELLENIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION
48 Vassileos Constantinou Ave., 116 35 Athens
Tel: (+30) 210 7273554
Fax: 210 7273629
e-mail: iie@eie.gr

Distribution: National Hellenic Research Foundation
48 Vassileos Constantinou Ave.
GR-116 35 Athens, Greece

Also distributed by:
https://history-bookstore.eie.en

ISBN 978-960-9538-88-6
ISSN 1106-1448

NATIONAL HELLENIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION
INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
SECTION OF BYZANTINE RESEARCH
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 23

Women and Monasticism in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Decoding a Cultural Map

Edited by
Eleonora Kountoura Galaki
Ekaterini Mitsiou

ATHENS 2019

In memory of
Elizabeth A. Zachariadou
1931-2018
and Ruth Macrides
1949-2019

Table of Contents

Abbreviations 11

Eleonora Kountoura Galaki and Ekaterini Mitsiou
Introduction 13

† Elizabeth Zachariadou
Mixed Marriages and Society in the Selcuk Sultanate of Rum 17

I. Women in Byzantium: Turning the Roles

Στεφανος Ευθυμιαδης
Γυναίκες, μοναχισμός και αγιολογία στη μεσοβυζαντινή και την υστεροβυζαντινή περίοδο 31

Nike Koutrakou
Politics, Strategies and Women in Byzantium (11th-13th centuries) 49

Leonora Neville
Anna Komnene: A Monastic Intellectual? 89

Marina Bazzani
(Male and) Female Protagonists in the Poems of Manuel Philes 107

Anna Sklaveniti
Women in Nikephoros Gregoras' Works: Love Stories, Politics, Literacy and Social Conventions 139

Eleonora Kountoura Galaki
Women Living on Palaiologan Naxos: The Epigraphic Evidence 163

† Ruth Macrides
Women in the Late Byzantine Court 187

II. Women beyond Byzantium

Angeliki Panopoulou
Working Indoors and Outdoors: Female Labour, Artisanal Activity and Retail Trade in Crete (14th-16th centuries) 207

Isabelle Ortega
Γυναίκες ευγενείς και οικογενειακές στρατηγικές στην Φραγκοκρατούμενη Πελοπόννησο από τον 13ο έως τον 15ο αιώνα 233

Taisiya Leber
Between Veil and Tomb: Nuns and their Burial Places in Early Russia (11th-12th centuries) 261

III. Women, Literacy and Art

ANTONIO RIGO
La direction spirituelle des moniales à Byzance (XIII^e-XV^e siècles) 283

MARIE-HÉLÈNE BLANCHET
Spiritual Guidance for Aristocratic Women: A Living Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople? Gennadios Scholarios and the Nun Sophrosyne 301

ΖΗΣΗΣ ΜΕΛΙΣΣΑΚΗΣ
Γυναίκες σε χειρόγραφα του Αγίου Όρους. Μία εξ αποστάσεως παρουσία σε ένα κόσμο άβατο 315

NICHOLAS MELVANI
Depictions of Nuns in Palaiologan Constantinople 335

IV. New Approaches and Insights

JOHANNES PREISER-KAPELLER
Mapping Networks of Women in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Concepts, Tools and Selected Results 349

EKATERINI MITSIOU
Female Monastic Space and Patronage in Late Byzantine Constantinople 365

PLATES 383

Abbreviations

AASS: *Acta Sanctorum*
AB: *Analecta Bollandiana*
ΑΔ: *Ἀρχαιολογικὸν Δελτίον*
BHG: Fr. Halkin, *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca* [Subs. Hag. 8a], Brussels ³1957.
Byz: *Byzantion*
BF: *Byzantinische Forschungen*
BMFD: *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, ed. by J. Thomas, A. Constantinides Hero and G. Constable [DOS 35], vols 1-5, Washington, D.C. 2000
BMGS: *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies*
BSl: *Byzantinoslavica*
BZ: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CA: *Cahiers archéologiques*
CCSG: Corpus Christianorum. Series Graeca
CCSL: Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina
CFHB: Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CRAI: *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*
CSCO: Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSHB: Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
ΔΧΑΕ: *Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας*
DOML: Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library
DOP: *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
DOS: Dumbarton Oaks Studies
DOT: Dumbarton Oaks Texts
DTC: *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*
ÉO: *Échos d'Orient*
ΕΕΒΣ: *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Βυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν*
ΕΕΚΣ: *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Κρητικῶν Σπουδῶν*
GRBS: *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
JÖBG / JÖB: *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik*
LSJ: H. G. Liddell, R. Scott and H. St. Jones et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford ⁹1889-1940, rev. repr. 1996.
MGH. SS: Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores
NE: *Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων*
OCA: Orientalia Christiana Analecta

OCP: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
ODB: *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, eds A. P. KAZHDAN, A.-M. TALBOT, A. CUTLER, T. E. GREGORY and N. P. ŠEVČENKO, vols I-III, New York-Oxford 1991.
PG: J.-P. MIGNE, *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca*, 1-167, Paris 1857-1866.
PLP: *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*, ed. by E. TRAPP et AL., Vienna 1976-1996.
PmbZ/1: *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Erste Abteilung (641-867)*, eds FR. WINKELMANN, R.-J. LILIE, CL. LUDWIG, TH. PRATSCH, I. ROCHOW et AL., vols 1-6, Berlin–New York 1999-2002.
PmbZ/2: *Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit. Zweite Abteilung (867-1025)*, eds FR. WINKELMANN, R.-J. LILIE, CL. LUDWIG, TH. PRATSCH, B. ZIELKE et AL., vols 1-9, Berlin–New York 2009-2013.
RÉB: *Revue des études byzantines*
RHM: *Römische historische Mitteilungen*
ROC: *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*
RSBN: *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*
RSBS: *Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi*
SBN: *Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici*
SC: Sources chrétiennes
Subs. Hag.: Subsidia Hagiographica
TM: *Travaux et Mémoires*
TU: Texte und Untersuchungen
VV: *Vizantiiskij Vremennik*
WBS: Wiener Byzantinistische Studien
ZRVI: *Zbornik radova vizantološkog instituta*

Introduction

Since the introduction of Women's Studies in historical research, Byzantine women have become an active field of study. The social and economic circumstances and their living conditions have been extensively studied. The pioneering works of Angeliki Laiou, Judith Herrin and Liz James were followed by studies undertaken by other scholars such as Joëlle Beaucamp and Alice-Mary Talbot. Laiou concentrated on the socio-economic parameters; Herrin and James, on the other hand, focused on issues of power and women, Beaucamp analysed women's status under the law, while Talbot focused on religious women.

Under the influence of the cultural turn, the focus moved from women and their social role to the construction of Gender. The concept of gender is a cross-cutting issue in every aspect of studies related to societies either of modern or earlier times. According to Liz James "as a tool for research, gender refers to the differences between men and women in terms of the differences created by societies rather than the biological differences of sex"[1]. Byzantine and Medieval Studies followed these developments. Particular thematic fields like the body, the diet, sexuality and theatricality were introduced as well. In recent years, Gender Studies have also come to encompass men and analyse the history of masculinity, homosexuality, homoeroticism, and homosociability.

Yet, medieval women continue to form a significant focus of Gender Studies and Medieval History, as the number of publications and conferences demonstrates. One of these was the workshop "Women and Monasticism in the Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Decoding a Cultural Map" organised by the project "Women's Monasticism in the Late Byzantine Period" which was implemented at the Institute of Historical Research / Section of Byzantine Research at the National Hellenic Research Foundation. This workshop addressed the history of women and the concept of gender not only in the Byzantine Empire, but also in the Eastern Mediterranean. It aimed at expanding

1. L. James, Introduction, in: *Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium*, ed. by Eadem, London–New York 1997, xvii.

its focus to include women in Byzantium's neighbouring states with the purpose of tracing patterns of similar action and attitudes, common traditions, but also differences in a broader medieval context can be traced and analysed.

Contents

The present volume of the workshop proceedings contains contributions which explore the specific characteristics that accompany the female sex and integrate them into the political, social, spiritual and religious structures, highlighting at the same time particular roles played by women of various classes in different areas of the Eastern Mediterranean within a changing political environment. Furthermore by examining the role of women in the context of court policies, ideology, economy, art, and religion allows us to re-evaluate our perception of the medieval society.

Depending on their social position and origin, women are present in the medieval sources, as individuals or groups[2]; yet, some are more prominent than others. The general image is incomplete and stereotypical, based on well-established biases, reflecting the viewpoints of mostly male authors.

The roles and characteristics of each gender are distinct in these sources; masculine features such as strength, bravery, and wisdom are rarely attributed to women. On the other hand, features generally attributed to them, such as weakness are seen as negative qualities for men[3]. George Pachymeres speaks of "feminised Romans"[4] when he describes the inability of Byzantines to face the military challenges of their time. Manly disposition (*ἀρρενωπότερον φρόνημα*) in women was interpreted as an indication of holiness, spirituality, and political leadership[5]. In some instances, female nature is connected with despicable

2. M. Loukaki, Το παιχνίδι των αντιθέσεων στα εγκώμια γυναικών. Η περίπτωση του Νικολάου Καταφλώρον, in: *Ἀντικήνσωρ. Τιμητικός τόμος Σπύρου Ν. Τρωιάνου για τα ογδοηκοστά γενέθλιά του*, ed. by V. A. Leontaritou, C. A. Bourdara, E. Sp. Papagianni, Athens 2013, 895-915.

3. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἱστορία* (ed. L. Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia* [CSHB], vols. I-III, Bonn 1829-1855), vol. II, 600.17: *ἄνανδρος, ἐπὶ γυναικώδει διαίτῃ*.

4. George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* (ed. A. Failler, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations Historiques* [CFHB 24/1-5], vols I-V, Paris 1984-2000), X.16: vol. IV, 339.17-18: *τῶν Ῥωμαίων γυναικισθέντων*.

5. John Kantakouzenos, *Ἱστοριῶν Βιβλία Δ΄* (ed. L. Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1828-1832), vol. I, 125.18-20: *καὶ*

actions: John Chrysostomos argues that *γυναικῶδες γὰρ τὸ ὑβρίζειν*[6], John of Damascus copying Chrysostomos argued that dysthymia is a trait of the female character, a product of evil energy that does not appeal to men[7]. For his part, George Pachymeres repeats a well-established belief that wisdom is not a trait of women[8].

Despite the male dominated environment, some women succeeded in distinguishing themselves; yet, the male pen condemned them and devalued them. To site just one example, Niketas Choniates mocks Anna Komnene's failed attempt to occupy the throne by focusing on the insurmountable differences between the two sexes. Anna cursed her fate to have been born a woman and not a man[9]. Even so, women appear alongside their men as wives honouring the family life, while as widows they undertake financial responsibilities and become the leaders of the family. Some of them chose the monastic life, even from an early age.

However, through the broader interpretative approach, which the contributions of this volume achieved, sources can reveal important details of their lives, their social environment and the physical space in which they were active.

Among the studies in this volume four thematic areas can be distinguished. The first focuses on Byzantine women and their role as saints (Stephanos Efthymiadis), agents of political power (Nike Koutrakou, Leonora Neville, and Ruth Macrides †), objects of critic (Anna Sklaveniti), and pious members of the society who donated votive objects and founded churches (Marina Bazzani, Eleonora Kountoura Galaki). Zisis Melissakis addresses the literacy of women on the basis of manuscripts, whereas Antonio Rigo and Marie-Hélène Blanchet

---

πρὸς διοίκησιν ἔμπειρος πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων, καὶ φρονήσεως ἐρρωμενεστέρας ἢ κατὰ φύσιν γυναικείαν τυχοῦσα.

6. John Chrysostomos, *Ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὰς Πράξεις τῶν Ἀποστόλων*, *PG* 60, cols 13-384, here at 126, line 27.

7. John of Damascus, *Τὰ Ἱερὰ Παράλληλα*, *PG* 95, cols 1040-1588; *PG* 96, cols 9-441, here at col. 32: *Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀθυμεῖν τῆς φύσεώς ἐστι, τὸ δὲ πέρα τοῦ μέτρου, μανίας καὶ διαβολικῆς ἐστιν ἐνεργείας, καὶ γυναικώδους ψυχῆς.*

8. Pachymeres, *History*, II, 29: vol. I, 205.23-24: *σοφόν τι καὶ οὐ κατὰ γυναῖκας ποιοῦσα.*

9. Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin-New York 1975), vol. I, 10.52-56: *ὅτε καὶ λέγεται τὴν καισάρισσαν Ἄνναν πρὸς τὸ χαῦνον τοῦ ταύτης ἀνδρὸς δυσχεραίνουσαν ὡς πάσχουσαν δεινὰ διαπρίεσθαι καὶ τῇ φύσει τὰ πολλὰ ἐπιμέμφεσθαι ὑπ᾽ αἰτίαν τιθεῖσαν οὐχὶ μικρὰν ὡς αὐτῇ μὲν διασχοῦσαν τὸ ἄρθρον καὶ ἐγκοιλάνασαν τῷ δὲ Βρυεννίῳ τὸ μόριον ἀποτείνασαν καὶ σφαιρώσασαν.*

analyse the relations of spiritual fathers and nuns through the exchange of letters. Nicholas Melvani, on the other hand, demonstrates the importance of nuns and their visual depictions for Late Byzantine art. A group of essays related to "Women beyond Byzantium" deals with neighbouring societies. Elizabeth Zachariadou (†) analyses the political role of women in the Selcuk Sultanate of Rum, Taisiya Leber explores the Kievan Rus aristocratic women and their personal agency through their foundations, whereas Angeliki Panopoulou and Isabelle Ortega provide insights in the women of Latin Romania. Finally, two papers are dedicated to "New Approaches and Insights" into the study of women. Johannes Preiser-Kapeller depicts and analyses the female networks of the Palaiologan period based on Social Network Analysis, while Ekaterini Mitsiou focuses on the topological networks of foundations made by women and the spatial aspects of female agency.

We wish to thank the contributors of this volume for their insightful texts and their innovative approaches. We are also grateful to the National Hellenic Research Foundation for its hospitality as well as for including this volume in the publication series «Διεθνή Συμπόσια»/"International Symposium" of the Section of Byzantine Research of the Institute of Historical Research. None of the above would have been possible without the financial support of the project "Women's Monasticism in the Late Byzantine Period" financed by the European Social Funds and the Greek State.

Shortly before the volume went to press, Elizabeth Zachariadou and Ruth Macrides died unexpectedly. As a token of our gratitude, we dedicate the proceedings to the late Professors' memory.

Eleonora Kountoura Galaki
Ekaterini Mitsiou

† Elizabeth A. Zachariadou

Mixed Marriages and Society in the Selcuk Sultanate of Rum

The beginnings of the Selcuk dynasty were very humble. Its founder, Selcuk, was a pagan nomadic chieftain, recently converted to Islam, who appeared with his tribe in the vicinity of the Lake Aral around the year 970. He imposed his rule over those territories and soon afterwards over the prosperous surrounding countries. Developments followed very quickly. Less than a century later, in 1055 one of Selcuk's descendants, Tugrul, after conquering Persia, a country famous for its wealth and its culture, became the sultan of Baghdad, that is of the glorious and powerful centre of the Islamic world, the Caliphate[1]. Approximately ten year later, at the end of his reign, the Selcuks began to attack the eastern Byzantine territories pillaging important towns such as Melitene and Sebasteia. When Tugrul's successor Alp Arslan ascended the throne (1063) the situation was aggravated and the Byzantines began to take measures in order to defend their borders[2]. In 1069 a certain brother-in-law of Tugrul, also a nomadic chief, was obliged to escape to Anatolia, where he entered the

1. G. Makdisi, The Marriage of Tughril Beg, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 1 (1970), 259-275; cf. Idem, Les rapports, entre calif et sultan à l'époque seljuqide, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 6 (1975), 228-236. About the Byzantines' point of view on Tugrul and his successors, see A. Beihammer, Die Ethnogenese der seldschukischen Türken im Urteil christlicher Geschichtschreiber des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts, *BZ* 102/2 (2009), 589-614.

2. On these events, see Cl. Cahen, La première pénétration turque en Asie-Mineure (seconde moitié du XIe s.), *Byz* 18 (1946-1948), 5-31; B. Martin-Hisard, La Vie de Georges l'Hagiorite (1009/1010-29 juin 1065), *RÉB* 64-65 (2006-2007), 5-204; A. D. Beihammer, *Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim-Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1130*, London 2017.

Byzantine service[3]. In 1071 Alp Arslan defeated the Byzantine army in the fateful battle of Manzikert[4].

This defeat for the Byzantines meant the loss of Anatolia from their Empire and it 'may be regarded as the act which gave birth to Turkey'[5]. The country was very quickly invaded by Turkish nomads who arrived in huge numbers. A new state gradually emerged in Anatolia, the Selcuk Sultanate of Rum. It was not the only newly established Turkish state in Anatolia. In the chaos created after the dissolution of Byzantine rule several ambitious chiefs appeared who established their own small states, such as the Danishmendids[6] and the Mengücekids[7]. However, the Selcuk state of Rum prevailed because it was related to the huge Selcuk empire –an empire extending from Central Asia to Mesopotamia[8].

The population of this newly-born Sultanate, being in the majority Christian with a long religious and cultural tradition, was able to exert considerable influence upon the new masters in many areas and through various channels. On the other hand the newcomers were nomads who had been recently and superficially Islamised so that they continued with the Central Asiatic structure of their nomadic society and also with their customs and superstitions. Actually, their chiefs were excellent archers and herdsmen but at the same time exorcists,

3. His name was Erisighi or Arisghī or Erisghen; cf. CAHEN, La première pénétration (as in footnote 2), 27 footnote 3; IDEM, Les tribus turques d'Asie occidentale pendant la période seljukide, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 51 (1948), 185-187; cf. D. KOROBEINIKOV, The King of the East and the West: The Seljuk Dynastic Concept and Titles in the Muslim and Christian Sources, in: *The Seljuks of Anatolia, Court and Society in the Medieval Middle East*, ed. by A. C. S. PEACOCK and S. NUR YILDIZ, London–New York 2015, 68-90, esp. 72.

4. On the background of the battle, see J.-CL. CHEYNET, Mantzikert: un désastre militaire?, *Byz* 50 (1980), 410-438 (= IDEM, *The Byzantine Aristocracy and its Military Function* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2006, XIII).

5. CL. CAHEN, *The Formation of Turkey. The Seljukid Sultanate of Rūm: Eleventh to Fourteenth Century*, translated and edited by P. M. HOLT, New York 2014, 7.

6. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, Les Danishmendides entre Byzance, Bagdad et le Sultanat d'Iconium, *Revue Numismatique* 25 (1983), 189-207 (= IDEM, *Byzantium from the Ninth Century to the Fourth Crusade. Studies, Texts, Monuments* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, XIX).

7. O. PANCAROĞLU, The House of Mengüjek in Divriği: Constructions of Dynastic Identity in the Late Twelfth Century, in: *The Seljuks of Anatolia* (as in footnote 3), 25-67.

8. KOROBEINIKOV, The King of the East and the West (as in footnote 3), 79-81; cf. PEACOCK and YILDIZ, Introduction, in: *The Seljuks of Anatolia* (as in footnote 3), 6-12.

miracle-workers and healers of human creatures but also of their cattle and their beasts of burden. Some of their priests wore clothes decorated with little bells that frightened the little children[9].

Military and administrative authorities moved from the old Islamic centres to the Sultanate of Rum in order to organise it according to the Islamic laws and traditions, but that was not an easy job. As was to be expected, the nomadic chiefs were not always in good terms with the traditional Muslim authorities and it is doubtful whether the early Turkish chieftains of Anatolia received any kind of legitimation from the Caliphate[10]. For this reason the early years of the Sultanate of Rum were very confused and the first Selcuk governor of Anatolia Suleyman son of Kutlumush was killed under obscure circumstances somewhere near the Syrian frontier in 1086.

Despite this uneasy and war-like atmosphere, relations between the Selcuk regime and the Greek Orthodox Church were established quite early and more precisely since the time of Suleyman son of Kutlumush who allowed the Greek Patriarch of Antioch to remain in his see[11]. Around this time the Byzantine scholar and indefatigable intellectual Michael Psellos wrote a treatise on the Incarnation addressed to the Selcuk sultan Malikshah, the son of the victorious Alp Arslan, praising his religious tolerance[12]. One can therefore trace an early tendency towards some arrangement between Byzantines and Selcuks at least with respect to ecclesiastical matters.

In the eastern frontier zones of the Sultanate of Rum large numbers of warriors were present. They moved there from all the Islamic countries and were inspired by various motives. The main motive was supposed to be the holy war against the infidels. The decline of the Byzantine Empire had become visible and a young man of that time could hope for a brilliant military career in the Selcuk army, or just to get rich by plundering or by selling his own prisoners as slaves –prisoners captured in the usual raids of the nomads. Turkish nomads

9. I. MÉLIKOFF, *Hadji Bektach, un mythe et ses avatars. Genèse et évolution du soufisme populaire en Turquie* [Islamic History and Civilization. Studies and Texts 20], Leiden 1998, 4-29.

10. CAHEN, *The Formation of Turkey* (as in footnote 5), 135-136.

11. *Ibidem*, 126-127.

12. Michael Psellos, *Ἀπόδειξις ἀπὸ διαφόρων λόγων τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου ἐνσωματώσεως· ἐστάλη πρὸς τὸν σουλτάνον ἀπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως*, ed. P. GAUTIER, Lettre au Sultan Malik-Shah rédigée par Michel Psellos, *RÉB* 35 (1977), 73-97. C. M. B[RAND], Malikshah, in: *ODB*, vol. II, 1277.

joined the Muslim warriors because being a nomad and a Muslim warrior was not an incompatible combination, provided that the nomad accepted military discipline. In any event, these warriors had to find their women among their enemies' ranks and usually among their Christian prisoners. Under these circumstances mixed marriages became fairly common in Muslim Anatolia the population of which, it will be recalled, consisted of the old Byzantine population, of the Selcuk Turks the new masters of the country, but also of Armenians, Jews and after the First Crusade of Franks. After all, the Turks of Anatolia were the first Muslim enemies to be encountered by the Frank soldiers of the First Crusade when they crossed from Thrace to Asia Minor.

Most unfortunately, historians and chroniclers of the past have ignored the marriage of the poor and humble; therefore we know very little about life in a poor mixed family. On the other hand historians and chroniclers have given long accounts of the great and the rich who married in splendour. They have also given satisfactory information about the policy of intermarrying for the purposes of an alliance –political or military– between the powers of their time. Of course, marriages of this kind took place in both worlds, the Muslim and the Christian. The signs of a policy of intermarriage between the Selcuk sultanic family and the Byzantines can be traced back to a quite early date. Around 1090 Malikshah sought alliance with the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) proposing the marriage of his son to a daughter of Alexios; but at that time the Empire was still strong and the emperor declined the marriage proposal[13].

Under Alexios' successors, John II (1118-1143) and Manuel I (1143-1180), diplomatic contacts between Constantinople and Ikonion developed successfully so that the Selcuk sultan of Rum Masud visited the Byzantine capital in 1124, that is approximately half a century after the defeat at Manzikert. For the first time in history Constantinople received a Muslim sultan. Masud was received in a friendly manner by the then emperor John II Komnenos. Approximately 37 years later Manuel Komnenos received in Constantinople the Selcuk sultan Kılıç Arslan II, who arrived there defeated and ready to sign a humiliating treaty[14].

---

13. CAHEN, *The Formation of Turkey* (as in footnote 5), 10.

14. P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 76-77; cf. D. KOROBEINIKOV, A Sultan in Constantinople: the Feasts of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Kay-Khusraw I', in: *Eat, Drink and Be Merry (Luke 12:19) – Food and Wine in Byzantium. Papers of the 37th Annual Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, in Honour of Professor A.A.M.*

In the years that followed the situation in the Byzantine territories changed dramatically as a result of the oppressive presence of the Crusaders, who finally conquered Constantinople, and of the establishment of the Empire of Nicaea in Asia Minor. Under the pressure of these events Byzantines and Selcuks were obliged to come closer and live in peace most of the time considering the Franks as their common enemy. The first historian to study the relations of the Selcuks of Rum with the Byzantines of Nicaea during this period was M. F. Köprülü who concluded that, despite the occasional pressure of the nomads upon the Byzantine frontier, these relations were on the whole good[15]. His convincing conclusions have been accepted and one reads in recent studies that the emperors of Nicaea did never represent the Sultanate of Rum as a dangerous neighbour while they regarded the territory of the Sultanate as a Byzantine land[16]. The Mongol conquest of Anatolia in 1243 obliged the Seljuks of Ikonion and the Laskarids of Nicaea to come much closer. Both states now had a more fearsome common enemy, the Mongols. Political and commercial links between the two states became necessary and moreover better organised and frequent[17].

A study of the relations between Byzantium and the Sultanate of Rum in the time of the sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kay-Khusraw I is revealing with respect to the religious, the social attitudes and the Islamic principles of that time. The life of this sultan was unusually adventurous as it coincided with the Fourth Crusade and the conquest of Constantinople by the Latins[18]. Internal dynastic strife after the death of his father obliged Kay-Khusraw I to flee to Constantinople in spring 1196 where he met the Byzantine Emperor Alexios

---

Bryer, ed. by L. BRUBAKER and K. LINARDOU [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 13], Aldershot 2007, 93-108, esp. 93-96.

15. M. F. KÖPRÜLÜ, *Les origines de l'Empire Ottoman*, Paris 1935, 33-39 and passim; cf. also O. TURAN, Les souverains Seldjoukides et leurs sujets non-Musulmans, *Studia Islamica* 1 (1953), 65-100.

16. D. G. ANGELOV, Theodore Laskaris on the Sultanate of Rum and the Flight of 'Izz al-dīn Kay Kāwūs II', *Journal of Turkish Studies* 36 (2011) [= *In Memoriam Angeliki E. Laiou*, ed. by C. KAFADAR and N. NECIPOĞLU], 26-43, esp. 28.

17. M. ANGOLD, *A Byzantine Government in Exile, Government and Society under the Laskarids of Nicaea (1204-1261)*, Oxford 1975, 116-117.

18. A thorough study of Kay-Khusraw I's life is made by D. KOROBEINIKOV, *Byzantium and the Turks in the Thirteenth Century*, Oxford 2014, 82, 96-98, 111-125 and passim; cf. IDEM, A Sultan in Constantinople (as in footnote 14), 93-96.

III Angelos (1195-1203) in person. Alexios was going through a most difficult period of his reign and avoided becoming involved in the affairs of the Sultanate. Kay-Khusraw was obliged to return to Ikonion only to find that he had been completely deprived of all his possessions by one of his brothers. Nevertheless, he attempted a second visit to Constantinople where he arrived in around 1200. This time Alexios III received him, adopted him and, according to Akropolites, had him baptised[19]. After all Kay-Khusraw had a Christian mother probably of Byzantine origin. This was very common at that time; according to the Jacobit Patriarch at Aleppo Gregory Abu'l Faraj (1252-1286), the mothers of the sultans were generally Christians and this explains the favour of their sons towards the Christians[20]. Kay-Khusraw I married also a Christian girl, the daughter of Manuel Mavrozomes[21], a strong man in the Emperor's milieu, related to the Komnenian military elite, who had the title of 'great patrikios'.

The situation in the Sultanate of Rum changed soon and Kay-Khusraw's enemies disappeared. Informed about these events he left Constantinople and marched back to his country to ascend the throne. Although apostasy from Islam is an appallingly serious sin, punishable by death, Kay-Khusraw was accepted by his supporters and his subjects and became the Sultan of Rum in his capital, which at that time began to develop as a political and cultural centre. Mavrozomes, his father-in-law, followed him to Ikonion and was appointed to a high position in the Selcuk administration. It is clear that the prohibition

19. On the Christianisation of Kay-Khusraw I, see KOROBEINIKOV, *Byzantium and the Turks* (as in footnote 18), 122-124. Some scholars doubt whether Kay-Khusraw was baptised; I do not share their doubts because the event is clearly mentioned by the trustworthy historian George Akropolites, *Χρονικὴ Συγγραφή* (ed. A. HEISENBERG and P. WIRTH, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol. I, Leipzig 1903, repr. Stuttgart 1978), 14.10-14. See R. MACRIDES, *George Akropolites: The History. Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Oxford 2007, 127-132.

20. J. RICHARD, *La papauté et les missions d'Orient au Moyen Age (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* [Collection de l'école française de Rome 33], Rome 1977, 44. On the Christian mothers of the Selcuk sultans, see R. SHUKUROV, Harem Christianity: The Byzantine Identity of Seljuk Princes, in: *The Seljuks of Anatolia* (as in footnote 3), 115-150.

21. S. MÉTIVIER, Les Mavrozômai, Byzance et le sultanat de Rūm. Note sur le sceau de Jean Comnène Mavrozômès, *RÉB* 67 (2009), 197-207; cf. EADEM, Byzantium in Question in 13th-century Seljuk Anatolia, in: *Liquid and Multiple: Individuals and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, ed. by G. SAINT-GUILLAIN and D. STATHAKOPOULOS [Collège de France – CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 35], Paris 2012, 235-257, where she presents her objections to some recent studies.

dictated by the Koran was ignored; only Kadi Tirmizī issued a *fetvā* to claim that Kay-Khusraw should be excluded from the Selcuk throne[22].

Some decades later another sultan, Izzedin Kay-Kawus II[23], was also obliged to take refuge with the Byzantines twice. In his time political changes of the greatest importance took place: the Mongols invaded Asia Minor in 1243 and the Selcuk sultans became their vassals. The defeated sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kay-Khusraw II died two years later and left as his successor Izzedin Kay-Kawus II, who had to confirm his vassal status in front of the Mongol Great Khan. The emperor of Nicaea John Vatatzes succeeded in concluding a peace treaty with the Mongols which was repeatedly renewed. Serious quarrels between members of the sultanic family who disputed over the throne and provoked the interference of the Mongols obliged Izzedin II to flee to Nicaea in 1257; he was received by the emperor with whom he had already an alliance. Izzedin II's mother was a Christian and she was the daughter of an orthodox priest who was a distinguished inhabitant of Ikonion. This certainly facilitated his relation with the Laskarids who supported him. In any event, his stay with them was very short as Izzedin managed to get back to Ikonion after four months.

The second time, in 1261, Izzedin in view of the danger from the Mongols, escaped with all his family to Constantinople which in the meantime had been restored as the capital of the Byzantine Empire[24]. He sought protection from the emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos; the two men had met in Ikonion when Michael served as commander of the mercenaries of the Selcuk army. The emperor helped him to settle down there. In the Byzantine capital Izzedin declared that he was the son of Christian parents, that he had received holy baptism, he had always cherished the adoration of sacred icons etc[25]. Some of his Christianised descendants settled in Beroia, in lands bestowed upon them by the Byzantine emperors. It is noteworthy that his descendants kept the title of sultan[26].

---

22. TURAN, Les souverains Seldjoukides (as in footnote 15), 79-80; the author expresses some doubts about the authenticity of the *fetvā*.

23. CL. CAHEN, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. by E. VAN DONZEL, B. LEWIS and CH. PELLAT, vol. IV, Leiden ³1997, 813-815.

24. ANGELOV, Theodore Laskaris on the Sultanate of Rum (as in footnote 16), 26.

25. P. WITTEK, Yazijioghlu Ali on the Christian Turks of the Dobruja, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14 (1952), 639-668 esp. 659-660.

26. Ε. Α. ZACHARIADOU, Οι Χριστιανοί απόγονοι του Ιζεδδίν Καϊκαούς Β΄ στη Βέροια, *Μακεδονικά* 6 (1964), 62-74.

The case of the two Selcuk sultans, who abandoned Islam for Christianity -Kay-Khusraw temporarily, Izzedin for good- shows that religious mobility, at least during times of political and social instability, was one of the characteristic features of the Sultanate of Rum. We conclude that both sultans, when they were the only rulers in their Sultanate, had no aversion to the religion of their subjugated subjects. More precisely, in the Sultanate of Rum the religion of the subjugated, even of the oppressed, was not just tolerated, as the Koran commands, but could be adopted even by sultans and at least with respect to Izzedin II practiced for good.

The attitude of the two sultans was not two isolated cases. The inclination of certain Muslim rulers towards Christianisation is reported by several Westerners mainly Dominican and Franciscan friars active in Asia during the thirteenth century[27]. But it was with the sultans of Ikonion that some promising theological negotiations took place[28]. The attitude of these sultans towards Christianisation was known even to the royal circles of Central Europe: according to a letter written in 1219 by the king of Hungary Andrew II, the Selcuk sultan (*Zuldanus Hyconie*) asked for his daughter in matrimony and promised to become a Christian if the marriage took place. The king was just back on his throne after having participated in the unsuccessful Fifth Crusade and we may guess that he was aware of the situation in the Levant. In any event, he did not decline the marriage proposal and he asked the Pope's permission in order to send a niece of his as a bride[29]. It remains to be examined how much the Byzantines or the Greek orthodox clergy cared for or tried to profit by this tendency towards Christianisation or more daringly 'Byzantinophilia'.

It is worth examining the identities of the wives chosen by the sultans mentioned above[30]. I do not have much to say much about the daughter of Mavrozomes as all we know about her is that she was a girl of a Byzantine aristocratic family. We know more about the mother of Izzedin who was the wife of Kay-Khusraw II, that is of the sultan defeated by the Mongols. As already stated her father was a priest who belonged to the upper class of the town of Ikonion; she had two brothers, Kir Khaya and Kir Kadid. I have been unable to decipher their names but the vocative Kir is obviously the Greek Kyr

27. RICHARD, *La papauté* (as in footnote 20), 8, 43-44.

28. *Ibidem*, 45-46.

29. A. THEINER, *Vetera Monumenta Historica Hungariam Sacram Illustrantia*, vol. I, Rome 1859, 20-21. The matrimonial project seems not to have materialised.

30. SHUKUROV, Harem Christianity (as in footnote 20), 115-120.

(Kyrios)[31], which shows that they were Christians. Both occupied high posts in the administration and the army and exercised great influence in the sultanic court; their daughters were married to rich and prestigious husbands[32]. All this shows that in the Sultanate of Rum lived an opulent upper class which included offspring of the old Byzantines of the good times. For these people religion does not seem to have been a major consideration. Several other sources mention Christians serving in the Selcuk administration with names such as Vassileios, Michael etc.

As I have already said we are not sufficiently well informed about every day life in a poor family with a Muslim father and a Christian mother. Nevertheless we can look at certain aspects of the problem after taking into consideration that according to the Islamic rules the woman has the right to retain her own religion. This means that at least in the inner rooms of some houses of Ikonion one could have seen icons of saints and oil-lamps and the holy cross. And there cannot be any doubt that these objects were used in critical moments, –in a natural disaster, an earthquake or during an epidemic[33]. We can assume that a certain religious confusion existed inside the family –at least inside some families– which affected the whole of society. These facts perhaps explain how some Christian saints such as St George, St Amphilochios, St Theodoros and some others, penetrated the Turkish masses and were venerated by them. They are known thanks to the studies of Hasluck published in 1929[34].

Another problem resulting from the mixed families was the baptism of the children. The Patriarch of Constantinople was obliged to face this problem in the middle of the twelfth century. Muslim Selcuk Turks declared in the Byzantine capital that they were baptised when they were still little children –some of them because their mothers were Christian but some others because they were told that those not baptised smell like dogs. The Patriarch was not satisfied with these answers and did not accept them as Christians. Nevertheless, and in my opinion, this story reveals how a mother managed to have her children

31. On *kir*, cf. KOROBEINIKOV, *Byzantium and the Turks* (as in footnote 18), 87.

32. *Ibidem*, 202.

33. E. A. ZACHARIADOU, À propos du syncrétisme Islamo-chrétien dans les territoires ottomans, in: *Syncrétismes et hérésies dans l'Orient seldjoukide et ottoman (XIVe-XVIIIe siècle), Actes du Colloque du Collège de France, octobre 2001*, ed. by G. VEINSTEIN [Collection turcica 9], Paris 2005, 395-399; SHUKUROV, Harem Christianity (as in footnote 20), 123.

34. F. W. HASLUCK, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans of Konya*, vols I-II, Oxford 1929, vol. I, 9-18, 30-31, 47-49, 98-118, 319-322, and vol. II, 368, 571-572.

baptised by inventing reasons which would not hurt the religious feelings of her Muslim husband[35]. The pretext of the bad smell was apparently very effective. The Burgundian nobleman and spy Bertrandon de la Broquière during his stay in Asia Minor in 1432-1433 visited the little emirate of the Ramazanoğlu in the region of Adana. The mother of Ramazanoğlu was a Greek orthodox lady who had baptised her son, who later became the Emir, in order to prevent him from stinking[36].

These political and religious attitudes, which perhaps betray 'accomodationist' tendencies, were helped by the type of Islam which prevailed in the Sultanate of Rum from the early years of its foundation and this was Sufism. One could go further by guessing that these tendencies created a favourable environment for the extensive spread of Sufism in Anatolia[37]. Sufism is the generally accepted name for the Islamic mysticism, which appeared as early as the ninth century in the Muslim world. Eminent scholars have stressed the importance of neo-Platonic influences upon the development of Sufism. Sufism became the popular Islam in Anatolia although much criticism was directed against it from the early tenth century, because according to some traditional Muslim theologians, it included extreme theological views while others placed it completely outside the sphere of Islam. Perhaps a tendency towards forgiving human mistakes and sins which Sufism advocated facilitated its spread within a society including many converts and persons obliged to share a common life with persons of a different religion.

It seems that most of the dervishes who visited the Sultanate of Rum belonged to sectarian mystical circles related to Sufism and apparently for this reason they prefered to move to a territory on the border of the Islamic

35. ZACHARIADOU, À propos du syncrétisme Islamo-chrétien (as in footnote 33), 399-400; N. OIKONOMIDÈS, La brebis égarée et retrouvée: l'apostat et son retour, in: *Religiöse Devianz. Untersuchungen zu sozialen, rechtlichen und theologischen Reaktionen auf religiöse Abweichung im westlichen und östlichen Mittelalter*, ed. by D. SIMON [Studien zur Europäischen Rechtsgeschichte 48], Frankfurt am Main 1990, 143-157 (= IDEM, *Social and Economic Life in Byzantium*, ed. by E. ZACHARIADOU [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2004, II). Cf. SHUKUROV, Harem Christianity (as in footnote 20), 124-126.

36. Bertrandon de la Broquière, *Le Voyage d'Outremer*, ed. by C. SCHEFER, Paris 1892, 90. B. KELLNER-HEINKELE, The Turkomans and Bilād aš-Šam in the Mamluk Period, in: *Land Tenure and Social Transformation in the Middle East*, ed. by T. KHALIDI, American University of Beirut 1984, 169-180.

37. On Sufism, see A. Y. OCAK, Social, Cultural and Intellectual Life, 1071-1453, in: *The Cambridge History of Turkey*, vol. I, Cambridge 2009, 390-399.

lands, remote from the Islamic centres, as the Sultanate of Rum was. There they could diffuse their kind of faith with freedom. One of them was the great Muslim theologian ibn-Arabi[38] who was considered by traditional Muslims as heretical because Jesus-Christ occupied an important place in his thought. A little later the famous mystic of Islam, Djelaleddin Rumi[39] established himself in Ikonion. In fact this town under the Selcuks became a new centre of mystical and religious life[40].

The Mongol occupation of Anatolia which lasted for more than 50 years added further religious confusion. The Mongols were still pagans and those of them who adopted a new religion –Christian, Muslim or Chinese Taoist– had an unclear picture of it. At that time the power of the Islamic theologians had almost been annihilated so that popular religiosity prevailed. We can perhaps conclude that all these factors made the Selcuk state of Rum look somewhat different from the other contemporary Muslim states of the time in the Middle-East.

The Sultanate of Rum disappeared at the beginning of the fourteenth century in rather obscure circumstances; all we know is that it is mentioned around 1308 for the last time. New political and military powers appeared among the Turks of Asia Minor with quite different political and religious convictions, ideas and ambitions. The moment of the Ottomans had arrived. Nevertheless, remnants of the Selcuk period of Anatolia survived in the Greek world. One of the remnants is the name of the Monastery of Kutlumush on Mount Athos, which has obviously a Turkish name unsuitable for the Athonite milieu. The fact was examined by P. Lemerle and P. Wittek who worked in the rich archive of the monastery and discovered that the name of the monastery is mentioned for the first time in a reliable document of 1169, i.e. in the early years of the rapprochement of the Selcuks with the Byzantines[41]. We can therefore

---

38. A. SCHIMMEL, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, The University of North Carolina Press 1975, 264-274.

39. On life in a Sufi family, cf. SP. VRYONIS JR., The Muslim Family in 13th-14th Century Anatolia as Reflected in the Writings of the Mawlawi Dervish Eflaki, in: *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389). Halcyon Days in Crete I. A Symposium held in Rethymnon 11-13 January 1991*, ed. by E. ZACHARIADOU, Rethymnon 1993, 213-223.

40. SCHIMMEL, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (as in footnote 38), 245-246, 312.

41. P. LEMERLE and P. WITTEK, Recherches sur l'histoire et le statut des monastères athonites sous la domination turque. Trois documents du monastère de Kutlumus, *Archives d'histoire du droit oriental* 3 (1947), 411-420; cf. P. LEMERLE, *Actes de Kutlumus* [Archives de l'Athos II/2], Paris ²1988, 1-5.

guess that the founder of the monastery was a christianised Turk, related to the family of Kutlumush, the father of Suleyman, who, as mentioned above, was the first governor of Anatolia and perhaps the founder of the dynasty of the Selcukids of Rum. The family was old and highly respected in the Muslim world and also well-known to the Byzantines[42]. As we saw, the general situation in Anatolia of that time easily accepted changes of religion and changes of sides.

Another possibly remnant of the Selcuk period of Byzantine history is the word *gazi*, which means a person who fights on behalf of Islam, a champion of Islam. The word is Arabic and was adopted by the Turks quite early. It was and still is used very frequently in Turkish literature and poetry, in theological sermons and discussions, in historical narratives and in official documents and it was granted as a title to generals with outstanding exploits such as Kemal Atatürk. It definitely sounds very odd to find the word *gazi* in Greek texts as a name of a Christian person or as the name of a Christian family[43]. As far as I can discover the name appears in the second part of the thirteenth century and more frequently in the fifteenth but also later in the period of the Greek Enlightenment. It occurs in texts as the surname of persons in the Byzantine administration and business and of scholars. One of the best Byzantine humanists who moved to Italy and taught at the University of Ferrara was Theodoros Gazis (*ca.*1400-1475/76). One of the philosophers and heroes of the Greek war of independence was Anthimos Gazis (d.1828). The meaning of their name or family name was certainly known to most of them, but they went on bearing it according to the Greek custom dictates that children strictly take the name of their ancestors.

The question now is how this name, very popular in the Islamic world, unsuitably penetrated into the Byzantine world. The only answer I have been able to find is that this penetration happened during the period of the Sultanate of Rum, in a mixed society from the religious point of view, but with flexibility, ready to absorb changes and obviously supporting co-existence.

42. Cl. Cahen, Qutlumush et ses fils avant l'Asie Mineure, *Der Islam* 39 (1964), 14-27.

43. *PLP* 3443, 3444, 3445, 3446, 3447, 3448, 3449, 3450.

WOMEN IN BYZANTIUM: TURNING THE ROLES

ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΣ ΕΥΘΥΜΙΑΔΗΣ*

Γυναίκες, μοναχισμός και αγιολογία στη μεσοβυζαντινή και την υστεροβυζαντινή περίοδο

Ως πρότυπα αρετής και ομολογίας πίστεως ενώπιον Θεού και ανθρώπων οι γυναίκες συγκαταλέχθηκαν από νωρίς στις κεντρικές μορφές όλων σχεδόν των ειδών της χριστιανικής λογοτεχνίας, όπως αυτά αναδείχτηκαν, αναπτύχθηκαν και άνθισαν στα χρόνια της ύστερης αρχαιότητας. Στα είδη αυτά η αγιότητά τους εγκωμιάστηκε με συναφείς ή και με διακριτούς όρους απ' ό,τι οι αντίστοιχες μορφές ανδρών αγίων και το παράδειγμά τους, κατ' αναλογία ή κατ' αντίθεση με εκείνο των ανδρών, προβλήθηκε ως προέκταση ή ως ρήξη με τα δεδομένα αυτού που λογιζόταν ως ο κοινωνικός τους ρόλος. Ως «έτοιμες από καιρό» να δεχτούν το στέφανο του μαρτυρίου συχνά συγκρούονται με την πατρική εξουσία, ως ηρωίδες του οικογενειακού βίου αντιπροσωπεύουν μια μορφή «έγκλειστης» αγιότητας, ως χήρες-διαχειρίστριες σημαντικής περιουσίας εμφανίζονται ως ευεργέτιδες της Εκκλησίας, ως μετανοημένες πόρνες εξελίσσονται σε θιασώτριες του ακραίου ασκητικού βίου, ως μεταμφιεσμένες σε άνδρες-μοναχούς απελευθερώνονται από τα δεσμά του γάμου και της ανδροκρατούμενης κοινωνίας, ως ηγουμένες μοναστηριακών κοινοβίων μοιραία υποβάλλουν την ιδέα πως η οργάνωση και η πειθαρχία δεν συνιστούν χάρισμα αποκλειστικό των ανδρών[1].

---

* Ανοικτό Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου.

1. Για γενικές μελέτες γύρω από το θέμα «αγιολογία και γυναίκα», βλ. ST. CONSTANTINOU, *Female Corporeal Performances. Reading the Body in Byzantine Passions and Lives of Holy Women* [Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 9], Uppsala 2005· Κ. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Η γυναίκα στη μέση βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αγιολογικά κείμενα* [Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, Μονογραφίες 6], Αθήνα 2005 και N. DELIERNEUX, The Literary Portrait of Byzantine Female Saints, στο: *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, τ. II: *Genres and Contexts*, επιμ. ST. EFTHYMIADIS, Farnham–Burlington 2014, 363-386. Για μια καταμέτρηση των γυναικών αγίων από τον τέταρτο έως τον δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα και σύντομη επισκόπηση των τύπων της γυναικείας αγιότητας, όπως διαδοχικά εμφανίζονται τη βυζαντινή περίοδο, βλ. την εισαγωγή της Α.-Μ. TALBOT, *Holy Women of Byzantium: Ten*

Όπως και στην περίπτωση των ανδρών αγίων, μετά το τέλος των διωγμών η γυναικεία αγιότητα εκπληρώνεται αποκλειστικά σχεδόν μέσω της μοναστικής ή/και της ασκητικής απομόνωσης.

Την περίοδο από τον τέταρτο έως τον έβδομο αιώνα ένα ευρύ και ποικίλο φάσμα κειμένων αποτυπώνει τις διαφορετικές αυτές περιπτώσεις γυναικείας αγιότητας, χαρίζοντάς μας πλούσιο υλικό για τη μελέτη του οικογενειακού και του κοινωνικού βίου κατά τη μετάβαση από τον αρχαίο στον χριστιανικό κόσμο. Πρόκειται για λογοτεχνία που δεν είναι ενιαία στη μορφή, δεν είναι δηλαδή ακόμα τυποποιημένη, και που θα την κατατάσσαμε στο είδος της αγιολογίας, με γνώμονα περισσότερο τη σημερινή «επιστημονική» σύμβαση παρά την τότε «χαλαρή» και «ανοικτή» σε ζητήματα μορφής και ύφους συγγραφική πραγματικότητα[2]. Η γυναικεία αγιότητα δεν αναδεικνύεται μόνο σε βιογραφίες και σε εγκώμια που υπακούουν στους κανόνες της ρητορικής τέχνης, αλλά και σε λόγους και σε επιστολές των Πατέρων της Εκκλησίας[3], σε ψυχωφελείς ιστορίες που είτε είναι ενταγμένες σε συλλογές όπως η *Λαυσαϊκή Ἱστορία* του Παλλαδίου, ή το *Λειμωνάριον* του Ιωάννη Μόσχου, είτε μας έχουν παραδοθεί ανώνυμες και αυτόνομες. Σε όλα αυτά τα κείμενα η γυναικεία αγιότητα εμφανίζεται αφενός ως υπέρβαση της «φυσικής» γυναικείας αδυναμίας, αφετέρου βιώνεται με τους όρους μιας κρυφής, «ιδιωτικής», θα έλεγε κανείς, αγιότητας που οπωσδήποτε απηχεί την αναβάθμιση της γυναίκας στη ρωμαϊκή κοινωνία και υποδηλώνει τους όρους μιας ζωής λιγότερο εξαρτημένης από την παντοδυναμία του άνδρα.

Όταν μετά τα μέσα του έβδομου αιώνα η αυτοκρατορία συρρικνώνεται και η ρωμαϊκή χριστιανική ταυτότητα έχει δογματικά αποκρυσταλλωθεί, το πλούσιο και ποικίλο αυτό μωσαϊκό της γυναικείας αγιότητας δύσκολα μπορεί πλέον να συντηρηθεί. Οι διαθρησκευτικές συγκρούσεις μεταπίπτουν στην αντιπαράθεση με το Ισλάμ και η Εικονομαχία των Ισαύρων, του Λέοντα Ε΄ του Αρμενίου και της δυναστείας του Αμορίου αναβιώνει, σε μικρότερη έστω κλίμακα, τις

Saints' Lives in English Translation, επιμ. της ίδιας [Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation I], Washington, D.C. 1996, x-xiii.

2. Βλ. σχετικά St. Efthymiadis, Introduction, στο: *The Ashgate Research Companion*, τ. II (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 1), 3-9.

3. Κρίνοντας από τις πολυάριθμες μνείες που της επιφυλάσσουν οι Πατέρες και οι εκκλησιαστικοί συγγραφείς του τέταρτου και πέμπτου αιώνα, η πιο εμβληματική μορφή είναι ασφαλώς η χήρα Ολυμπιάς. Βλ. μεταξύ άλλων, τη σύντομη αναφορά του P. Brown, *The Body and Society. Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*, London 1989, 282-284.

ενδοχριστιανικές δογματικές έριδες των πρώτων αιώνων. Η αντιπαράθεση με το Ισλάμ «γεννά» τους νεομάρτυρες αγίους που δρουν και ομολογούν κυρίως στην Παλαιστίνη, δηλαδή εκτός βυζαντινών συνόρων, και είναι όλοι, χωρίς εξαίρεση, άνδρες, φαινόμενο αξιοσημείωτο που μπορεί να ερμηνευθεί με όρους επιβολής, δηλαδή από το γεγονός ότι στο Ισλάμ η χριστιανή γυναίκα ως σύζυγος μουσουλμάνου μπορεί να διατηρήσει το θρήσκευμά της χωρίς προφανείς συνέπειες[4]. Στο ενδοβυζαντινό πεδίο και οι δύο φάσεις της Εικονομαχίας οφείλουν εν πολλοίς τη λύση τους σε αυτοκράτειρες γυναίκες, την Ειρήνη και τη Θεοδώρα, αλλά, παρά την αρχική εντύπωση, η παρουσία των γυναικών αγίων σε αγιολογικά και ιστοριογραφικά κείμενα δεν είναι αριθμητικά σημαντική. Με βάση κυρίως μια αποδελτίωση του *Συναξαρίου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως* οι Kazhdan και Talbot έδειξαν την κατακόρυφη πτώση του αριθμού των αγίων γυναικών κατά τον όγδοο και τον ένατο αιώνα, συμπεραίνοντας παράλληλα πως, παρά την κρατούσα εντύπωση περί του αντιθέτου, οι γυναίκες δεν διαδραμάτισαν κάποιον ιδιαίτερο ρόλο στην αντιπαράθεση με την εικονομαχική πολιτική των Ισαύρων, του Λέοντα Ε΄ του Αρμενίου και των διαδόχων του[5]. Η κατακόρυφη πτώση που παρατηρείται στους αριθμούς των αγίων γυναικών από τον έκτο αιώνα και μετά δεν διαφοροποιείται τον όγδοο αιώνα και το πρώτο μισό του ένατου όταν, αντίθετα, οι άνδρες άγιοι που υπερασπίστηκαν την προσκύνηση των εικόνων δεν ήταν καθόλου λίγοι[6].

Ωστόσο, η κρίση αυτή βασίζεται αποκλειστικά σε μια ποσοτικού χαρακτήρα αποτίμηση που αφενός παραγνωρίζει το ενδιαφέρον που εκδηλώνεται καταρχάς στην ενδιάμεση των δύο εικονομαχιών περίοδο και καταλήγει στο *Μηνολόγιον* του Συμεών Μεταφραστή και αφορά στους παλαιούς, τρόπον τινά, αγίους, αφετέρου δεν λαμβάνει υπόψη το γεγονός ότι στην εικονόφιλη ανάγνωση της αντίστασης στους εικονομάχους αυτοκράτορες ο ρόλος των γυναικών προβάλλει πρωταγωνιστικός. Ήδη μεταξύ του 787 και του 815, Μαρτύρια και *Βίοι* αγίων των πρώτων χριστιανικών αιώνων υπόκεινται σε ρητορική

4. Ο πλέον εξαντλητικός κατάλογος των νέων μαρτύρων-αγίων παραμένει αυτός του R. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on early Islam* [Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 13], Princeton 1997, 336-386. Επίσης βλ. τα λήμματα που αναφέρονται σε νεομάρτυρες στο: *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History.* Vol. I: *(600-900)*, επιμ. D. Thomas, B. Roggema [History of Christian-Muslim Relations 11], Leiden-Boston 2009.

5. A.-M. Talbot, A. P. Kazhdan, Women and Iconoclasm, *BZ* 84-85 (1991-1992), 391-408 (= A.-M. Talbot, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, III).

6. Βλ. επίσης Talbot, *Holy Women of Byzantium* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 1), x-xii.

ανάπλαση, στην πρακτική δηλαδή που ήταν γνωστή στους Βυζαντινούς με τον όρο *μετάφρασις*. Στα σωζόμενα κείμενα του Ιωάννη Σάρδεων, συγκέλλου του πατριάρχη Ταρασίου, συγκαταλέγεται και η ανέκδοτη *μετάφρασις* του Μαρτυρίου της αγίας Βαρβάρας, που οι λόγοι συγγραφής της, ιστορικοί ή φιλολογικοί, είναι μάλλον δύσκολο να εξακριβωθούν[7].

Στην ίδια περίπου εποχή εγγράφεται κι ένα γενικότερο ενδιαφέρον για μια «πρώιμη» αγία, την Ευφημία, μάρτυρα της Χαλκηδόνας που συνδέθηκε στενά με την πόλη που φιλοξένησε την πολύ σημαντική Δ΄ Οικουμενική Σύνοδο (451). Είτε το 626 ως συνέπεια της κατάκτησης της Χαλκηδόνας από τους Πέρσες είτε αργότερα, κάποια άλλη χρονική στιγμή στις αρχές του έβδομου αιώνα, τα λείψανά της θα μεταφερθούν στην Κωνσταντινούπολη και θα αποτεθούν στον ομώνυμο ναό της αγίας κοντά στον Ιππόδρομο[8]. Όπως καταγράφει ο Θεοφάνης ο Ομολογητής, ο Λέων Γ΄ ο Ίσαυρος, αντιδρώντας στην ευσεβή προσήλωση των πιστών στην αγία, θα αφαιρέσει τη λάρνακα των μυροδοτούντων λειψάνων από το ναό και θα τη ρίξει στο βυθό της Προποντίδας[9]. Ένα όραμα ωστόσο, το 796, επί βασιλείας Κωνσταντίνου Στ΄ και Ειρήνης, θα αποκαλύψει ότι τα οστά βρίσκονται στη Λήμνο απ' όπου θα συντελεστεί και η πανηγυρική μετακομιδή τους στην Κωνσταντινούπολη. Το γεγονός δίνει την αφορμή για τη συγγραφή ενός κειμένου που πρωταρχικό στόχο έχει την πολεμική κατά των εικονομάχων. Πρόκειται για τον *Λόγο* του Κωνσταντίνου επισκόπου Τίου *Εἰς τὴν εὕρεσιν τοῦ τιμίου λειψάνου τῆς ἁγίας μάρτυρος Εὐφημίας* (*BHG* 621), κείμενο που αφιερώνεται στον Γεώργιο επίσκοπο Αμάστριδος και που φέρεται να συγγράφεται περί το έτος 800[10]. Μολονότι όσοι αμφισβήτησαν την

7. Βλ. St. Efthymiadis, John of Sardis and the *Metaphrasis* of the *Passio* of St. Nikephoros the Martyr (*BHG* 1334), *RSBN*, n.s. 28 (1991), 23-44, ιδίως 26 και σημ. 17 (= Ο Ιδιος, *Hagiography in Byzantium: Literature, Social History and Cult* [Variorum Reprints], Farnham-Burlington 2011, VI).

8. Η πιο πρόσφατη εξέταση του ζητήματος παραμένει αυτή του A. Berger, Die Reliquien der heiligen Euphemia und ihre erste Translation nach Konstantinopel, *Ἑλληνικὰ* 39 (1988), 311-322.

9. Θεοφάνης, *Χρονογραφία* (έκδ. C. de Boor, *Theophanis Confessoris, Chronographia*, Leipzig 1883, ανατ. New York 1980), 439.27-440.11.

10. *Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου ἐπισκόπου Τίου Λόγος εἰς τὴν εὕρεσιν τοῦ τιμίου λειψάνου τῆς ἁγίας καὶ πανευφήμου μάρτυρος Εὐφημίας, προτραπέντος παρὰ Γεωργίου τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου ἐπισκόπου Ἀμαστρης* (έκδ. Fr. Halkin, *Euphémie de Chalcédoine: légendes byzantines* [SubsHag 41], Bruxelles 1965), 84-106. Ο εκδότης χρονολογεί το κείμενο μεταξύ του 796 και του 806, βλ. *αυτόθι*, 81-82. Η χρονολόγηση αυτή θεωρήθηκε πολύ πρώιμη τόσο από τους C. Mango [βιβλιοκρισία στο: *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s. 17 (1966), 485-

αξιοπιστία της μαρτυρίας του συγγραφέα, το τοποθετούν χρονολογικά μετά το 843, έτος της παλινόρθωσης της προσκύνησης των εικόνων, το γεγονός είναι πως το κείμενο αυτό περιέχει αξιοσημείωτες αναφορές στο ζήτημα της στάσης των γυναικών απέναντι στην κρατούσα εικονομαχική πολιτική τάξη. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, ο συγγραφέας του αναφέρει πως ο οργίλος Λέων, αυτός που αποκαλούσε τους εικονολάτρες και «ὀστεολάτρες» (§2), αφαίρεσε από την εκκλησία τα λείψανα και τα εναπέθεσε σε λάρνακα σε ένα από τα παρεκκλήσια του ιερού παλατίου, όπου κρυφά οι αδελφές και θυγατέρες του με αρώματα και μύρα και λαμπάδες τα προσκυνούσαν λόγω της θαυματουργικής τους δύναμης (§4)[11]. Όταν, χρόνια αργότερα, τα λείψανα επιστρέφουν στην πρωτεύουσα από τη Λήμνο, οι θυγατέρες του αυτοκράτορα και οι *ἀπὸ Ἀρταβαστίνης* προσποριζονται κομμάτια τους (§16)[12]. Άλλη περίπτωση συγγενούς εικονομάχου αυτοκράτορα που να εναντιώθηκε σε αυτόν αποτελεί και η αγία Ανθούσα που αρνήθηκε την πιεστική απαίτηση του πατέρα της Κωνσταντίνου Ε΄ να νυμφευθεί. Σύμφωνα με το *Συναξάριον Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, το ίδιο αρνήθηκε αργότερα να συμβασιλεύσει με την Ειρήνη την Αθηναία και εκάρη τελικά μοναχή «διὰ χειρὸς τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις Ταρασίου»[13]. Εύλογα μπορεί να διερωτηθεί κανείς ποιος λόγος υπαγόρευσε την ιδιαίτερη αναφορά στα σημεία αυτά στις γυναίκες του ιερού παλατίου και την ένταξή τους στη χορεία των ευσεβών και εκείνων που αποδοκίμαζαν την εκκλησιαστική πολιτική των Ισαύρων αυτοκρατόρων.

488] και I. Ševčenko, Hagiography of the Iconoclast Period, στο: *Iconoclasm. Papers Given at the Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, March 1975*, επιμ. A. Bryer, J. Herrin, Birmingham 1977, 113-131, ιδίως 124 σημ. 87 (= I. Ševčenko, *Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World* [Variorum Reprints], London 1982, V), όσο και από τον A. Berger, Die Reliquien der heiligen Euphemia. Αντίθετα, έγινε καταρχήν αποδεκτή από τον St. Gero, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III. With Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources* [CSCO 346], Louvain 1973, 4 σημ. 15 και Τον Ιδιο, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Constantine V. With Particular Attention to the Oriental Sources* [CSCO 384], Louvain 1977, 157-158.

11. *Λόγος εἰς τὴν εὕρεσιν τοῦ τιμίου λειψάνου τῆς ἁγίας καὶ πανευφήμου μάρτυρος Εὐφημίας*, 86-88.

12. *Αυτόθι*, 103.

13. *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae, Acta Sanctorum, Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*, έκδ. H. Delehaye, Bruxelles 1902, 612-613. Για την αγία αυτή, βλ. τη σύντομη αναφορά του C. Mango, St Anthusa of Mantineon and the Family of Constantine V, *AB* 100 (1982), 401-409, κυρίως 404 (= Ο Ιδιος, *Byzantium and its Image* [Variorum Reprints], London 1984, XI).

Το ερώτημα αποκτά ευρύτερες διαστάσεις αν συνυπολογίσει κανείς ότι ήδη από τον *Βίο* του Στεφάνου του Νέου (*BHG* 1666), που πρέπει να γράφτηκε είτε το 807 είτε το 809, η αντίδραση-αντίσταση στην πρώτη επίσημη εικονομαχική πράξη του Λέοντα Γ΄, δηλαδή στην αφαίρεση και καταστροφή της εικόνος του Χριστού από τη Χαλκή πύλη του ιερού παλατίου, πιστώνεται αποκλειστικά σε γυναίκες οι οποίες σε συνέχεια της πράξης τους φέρονται να θανατώνονται από τους στρατιώτες του αυτοκράτορα[14]. Μάλιστα μετά το πέρας της Δεύτερης Εικονομαχίας, η παράδοση αυτή προσωποποιείται και «διανοίγεται» σε δύο αγιολογικές εκδοχές οι οποίες στην εξέλιξη του συγκεκριμένου επεισόδιου της Χαλκής αποδίδουν πρωτεύοντα ρόλο είτε στην πατρικία Μαρία είτε στη μοναχή Θεοδοσία. Η αγιολογική παράδοση της Μαρίας ουσιαστικά εξαντλείται σε ένα και μόνο κείμενο συμπιληματικού χαρακτήρα (*BHG* 1195) του οποίου *terminus post quem* πρέπει να θεωρηθεί ο θάνατος του πατριάρχη Ιγνατίου το 877[15]. Η παράδοση της Θεοδοσίας, η οποία στην αρχαιότερη σωζόμενη της εκδοχή εμφανίζεται στο *Μηνολόγιον* του Βασιλείου Β΄ και στο *Συναξάριον Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, δεν είναι ακριβώς ενιαία αφού η μια της παραλλαγή (Α) τοποθετεί το επεισόδιο της Χαλκής στην ίδια βασιλεία του Λέοντα Γ΄, ενώ η δεύτερη παραλλαγή (Β) το μεταθέτει χρονολογικά στη βασιλεία του Κωνσταντίνου Ε΄[16]. Αντίθετα με την παράδοση της πατρικίας Μαρίας, εκείνη της μοναχής Θεοδοσίας αναπαράγεται σε διάφορα μεταγενέστερα κείμενα που χρονολογούνται στην ύστερη βυζαντινή περίοδο και αναφέρονται υπαινικτικά σε πολιτικά ζητήματα του καιρού τους[17].

---

14. *Βίος Στεφάνου Νέου* (έκδ. M.-Fr. Auzépy, *La Vie d'Étienne le Jeune par Étienne le Diacre* [Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 3], Aldershot-Hampshire 1997), §10,100.20-101.10. Για τη χρονολόγηση του *Βίου* στο έτος 809, βλ. *Αυτόθι*, 17-19 και 40-42· για εκείνη στο έτος 807, βλ. V. Déroche, Note sur la Vie d'Étienne le Jeune et sa chronologie interne, *RÉB* 60 (2002), 179-188.

15. *Βίος Μαρτύρων Κωνσταντινούπολης* (έκδ. *AASS*, Aug. II), 434-447. Το κείμενο εμφανίζεται πολλά αποσπάσματα από τη *Χρονογραφία* του Θεοφάνη. Για πλήρη κατάλογο των δανείων αυτών, βλ. S. Kotzabassi, *Das hagiographische Dossier der heiligen Theodosia von Konstantinopel* [Byzantinisches Archiv 21], Berlin-New York 2009, 3 και σημ. 14. Για το όλο ζήτημα της παράδοσης αυτής και τις πιθανές συνθήκες δημιουργίας της, βλ. M.-Fr. Auzépy, La déstruction de l'icône du Christ de la Chalké par Léon III: propagande ou réalité ?, *Byz* 60 (1990), 445-492 (= Η Ιδια, *L'histoire des iconoclastes* [Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de recherche 2], Paris 2007, 145-178).

16. *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 13), 828-830.

17. Έκδοση των κειμένων αυτών από την Kotzabassi, *Das hagiographische Dossier der heiligen Theodosia* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 15), 37-45, 84-98, 123-140. Για την υπαινικτική σύνδεση

Τόσο σε αυτή την περίπτωση των αρκετά αινιγματικών ως προς τη γένεσή τους αγιολογικών παραδόσεων που αφορούν στην αγία Μαρία και στην αγία Θεοδοσία, όσο και σε ό,τι αποτυπώνεται στο *Λόγο* του Κωνσταντίνου επισκόπου Τίου για την αγία Ευφημία, η πρόθεση να παρουσιαστούν οι γυναίκες ως σύμβολα πρωτογενούς-αυθόρμητης ευσέβειας που εκφράζει την αρχέγονη παράδοση της Εκκλησίας στο ζήτημα της προσκύνησης των εικόνων είναι προφανής. Η ιστορία της αντίστασης κατά των Ισαύρων γράφεται ή μυθογραφείται με όρους «έμφυλης» (gendered) ανάγνωσης των ιστορικών γεγονότων στα οποία εμπλέκονται οι εικονομάχοι. Έμμεσα οι τελευταίοι ταυτίζονται με το ιδανικό μιας στρατιωτικής αντρειοσύνης που, σε άλλα κείμενα, συμφύρεται με τη μομφή της απαιδευσίας και της αμάθειας[18]. Εν ολίγοις, όπως η αγία Ευφημία εικονογραφικά εμφανίζεται με τον τόμο της συνόδου της Χαλκηδόνας στα χέρια, εγγυώμενη κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο την αυθεντικότητα και την εγκυρότητα των δογμάτων της, έτσι και η πίστη στις εικόνες, που από ιστορικές συγκυρίες την υπερασπίστηκαν δύο αυτοκράτειρες, εξασφαλίζεται και τυποποιείται σε απόλυτη συνάρτηση με το γυναικείο φύλο.

Η αγιολογική αυτή «αναβάθμιση» της γυναίκας δεν περιορίζεται στο ζήτημα της εικονομαχίας. Στους χαρακτηριστικούς τύπους γυναικείας αγιότητας που συναντούμε τη μέση περίοδο συμπεριλαμβάνονται τόσο αυτοί της μοναχής-ηγουμένης, όσο και της «έγγαμης μάρτυρος». Οι τύποι αυτοί είναι μάλλον αντιθετικοί και χρονολογικά επάλληλοι. Το εγκώμιο που πλέκει ο Θεόδωρος Στουδίτης στην *Ἐπιτάφιον Κατήχησιν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα*, δηλαδή τη Θεοκτίστη, αναδεικνύει μιαν αγιότητα «σύμμεικτη» που βιώνει πρώτα τη μοναστική ζωή στον κόσμο και μεταφέρει πολλά από την εγκόσμια ζωή στο μοναστήρι[19]. Κατά τον βιογράφο υιό της, η Θεοκτίστη επιβαλλόταν στην οικογένεια και στο σπιτικό της με τον ίδιο τρόπο που θα επιβληθεί αργότερα

του Κωνσταντίνου Ε', όπως ψέγεται στο ανώνυμο Εγκώμιο της αγίας (*BHG* 1773z), με τον Μιχαήλ Η' Παλαιολόγο, βλ. E. Kountoura Galake, Constantine V Kopronymos or Michael VIII Paleologos the New Constantine? The Anonymous Encomium of Saint Theodosia, *Σύμμεικτα* 15 (2002), 183-194.

18. Για μια έμφυλη ερμηνεία του Μαρτυρίου της Μαρίας της πατρικίας υπό την προοπτική του «ευνούχου» πατριάρχη Ιγνατίου, βλ. Ch. Messis, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire* [Dossiers byzantins 14], Paris 2014, 202-204.

19. *Κατήχησις Ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα* (έκδ. St. Efthymiadis, J. M. Featherstone, Establishing a Holy Lineage: Theodore the Stoudite's Funerary Catechism for his Mother (*BHG* 2422), στο: *Theatron. Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter* [Millennium Studies 13], επιμ. M. Grünbart, Berlin 2007), 13-51 [= Efthymiadis, *Hagiography in Byzantium* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 7), XI].

στις μοναχές της και στο μοναστήρι της ως ηγουμένη. Η έξοδος από τον κόσμο συμπαρασύρει όλη την οικογένεια, άρρενες και θήλεις, κάτι που ο Στουδίτης εύστοχα το υπογραμμίζει ως «καινοτομία», αφού τέτοιο παράδειγμα έγγαμης γυναίκας που να εγκλείεται σε μοναστήρι, πριν από τη χηρεία της, ήταν έως τότε μοναδικό:

> *...πείθει τὸν ἄνδρα, συμπείθει τοὺς παῖδας πολλαῖς ἐπιμελείαις καὶ νουθεσίαις καὶ ὑποσχέσεσιν, ἔπειτα τοὺς ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἀδελφούς. Καὶ τὰ πάντα εὖ διαθεμένη, ἐξέρχεται τῆς οἰκίας, δῆμον ὅλον τῷ Θεῷ παραστήσασα, τέτταρα μὲν τὰ τέκνα, τρεῖς τοὺς ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ μεθ' ἑαυτῆς τὴν κεφαλήν. Ὢ τῆς θαυμασίας καινοτομίας! Ὢ τῆς παραδόξου μεταναστάσεως!*[20]

Μια πρώτη περίπτωση προβολής της γυναικείας αγιότητας από μέλη της ίδιας οικογένειας αναδύεται εδώ για να επανεμφανιστεί μερικές δεκαετίες αργότερα, στα τέλη του ένατου αιώνα, στην περίπτωση της αγίας Θεοδώρας της Θεσσαλονίκης.

Αντλώντας βιογραφικά στοιχεία από τη Θεοπίστη, την κόρη της αγίας, ο κληρικός Γρηγόριος συγγράφει τον εκτενέστερο *Βίο* της μεσοβυζαντινής περιόδου συμπληρώνοντάς τον με τα μεταθανάτια θαύματα της αγίας[21]. Το εγχείρημα δεν είναι εύκολο, να εδραιωθεί η τιμή σε μια γυναίκα-μοναχή που μεταναστεύει σε μια πόλη που χαρακτηρίζεται ασφαλής και ειρηνική χάρη στον προστάτη της άγιο Δημήτριο. Η οικογένεια και η συγγένεια συμβάλλουν καταλυτικά στην ανάδειξη της αγιότητας και αυτό δεν αποσιωπάται από τον βιογράφο Γρηγόριο. Βρισκόμαστε και εδώ ενώπιον μιας αντιστροφής της συγγένειας που συντελείται με πνευματικούς όρους. Η Θεοδώρα υποτάσσεται πνευματικά στην ηγουμένη κόρη της Θεοπίστη η οποία κατ' αυτόν τον τρόπο καθίσταται πνευματική της μητέρα[22]. Όλα αυτά θυμίζουν την περίπτωση της

---

20. *Κατήχησις Ἐπιτάφιος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μητέρα*, §6.9, 30.

21. *Γρηγορίου κληρικοῦ, Βίος καὶ Πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοδώρας τῆς ἐν τῇ Θεσσαλονίκῃ*, έκδ. και απόδοση στα νέα ελληνικά: Σ. Α. ΠΑΣΧΑΛΙΔΗΣ, *Ὁ βίος τῆς ὁσιομυροβλύτιδος Θεοδώρας τῆς ἐν τῇ Θεσσαλονίκῃ. Διήγηση περὶ τῆς μεταθέσεως τοῦ τιμίου λειψάνου τῆς ὁσίας Θεοδώρας* [Ιερά Μητρόπολις Θεσσαλονίκης. Κέντρον Ἁγιολογικῶν Μελετῶν 1], Θεσσαλονίκη 1991.

22. Για την προαγωγή της τιμής της αγίας από το οικογενειακό της περιβάλλον, βλ. A.-M. TALBOT, Family Cults in Byzantium: the Case of St Theodora of Thessalonike, στο: *ΛΕΙΜΩΝ. Studies Presented to Lennart Rydén on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, επιμ. J.-O. ROSENQVIST [Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 6], Uppsala 1996,

οικογένειας του Θεοδώρου Στουδίτη, ωστόσο, αυτό που κεντρίζει το ενδιαφέρον μας εδώ είναι το γεγονός ότι η αγιότητα της μητέρας προβάλλεται κυρίως μέσα από την κοινωνική επιρροή που ασκεί η κόρη, δηλαδή όχι ένας άνδρας αλλά μια γυναίκα.

Ανάλογο παράδειγμα αγιολογικής χειραφέτησης της γυναίκας αγίας ενσαρκώνει και μια άλλη Θεοκτίστη, η Λεσβία. Ως γνωστόν, ο λογοτεχνικά αριστουργηματικός της *Βίος* που οφείλουμε στον Νικήτα Μάγιστρο (*BHG* 1723) αναπαράγει σε μεγάλο βαθμό την ιστορία της Μαρίας της Αιγυπτίας μεταμορφώνοντας τη μετανοήσασα πόρνη σε απαχθείσα από Άραβες πειρατές μοναχή[23]. Μέσα από τις εγκιβωτισμένες διηγήσεις τριών ανδρών και μιας γυναίκας ο *Βίος* δένει αρμονικά την ιστορία με τη μυθιστορία μέσα σ' ένα διάχυτο κλίμα κλασικισμού που φυσικά δεν διέπνεε το κείμενο-πρότυπο. Η συνάντηση του κυνηγού με τη Θεοκτίστη στην Πάρο κατά κάποιον τρόπο παραπέμπει στη συνάντηση Οδυσσέα και Ναυσικάς στο ζ της Οδύσσειας, μόνο που εδώ οι ρόλοι των φύλων αντιστρέφονται και η γυμνότητα γίνεται «πρόβλημα» για τη γυναίκα (Θεοκτίστη) και όχι για τον άνδρα. Σε αντίθεση με την αντίστοιχη σκηνή στον *Βίο* της οσίας Μαρίας, το φύλο της αναχωρήτριας είναι εξαρχής αναγνωρίσιμο και η σωματική της περιγραφή αισθητά λιγότερο απόκοσμη από εκείνη της αποστεωμένης Μαρίας. Με άλλα λόγια, προφανώς σε συμφωνία με το πνεύμα της εποχής του συγγραφέα της βιογραφίας της, η

49-69, ιδίως 55-56. Για τον χώρο τον οποίο η αγία Θεοδώρα μοιράζεται και «διεκδικεί» από τον άγιο Δημήτριο, βλ. ΣΤ. ΕΥΘΥΜΙΑΔΗΣ, Η μεσαιωνική Θεσσαλονίκη και τα θαύματα των αγίων της. Μικρές και μεγάλες διεκδικήσεις ενός αποκλειστικού προνομίου (9ος-12ος αι.), *Βυζαντινά* 28 (2008), 51-67, ιδίως 58-62 [αγγλ. μτφρ. του ίδιου άρθρου στο: EFTHYMIADIS, *Hagiography in Byzantium* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 7), XIII].

23. *Βίος τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Θεοκτίστης τῆς Λεσβίας ... συγγραφεὶς ὑπὸ Νικήτα τοῦ πανευκλεεστάτου μαγίστρου* (έκδ. *AASS*, Nov. IV), 224-233. Η τάση του Νικήτα Μαγίστρου να αμβλύνει τις ακρότητες του κειμένου το οποίο του είχε χρησιμεύσει ως πρότυπο για τη συγγραφή του *Βίου* της αγίας Θεοκτίστης είχε επισημανθεί από τον A. KAZHDAN, Hagiographical Notes, *BZ* 78 (1995), 49-55, ιδίως 49-50 (= Ο ΙΔΙΟΣ, *Authors and Texts in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 1993, V). Για μια λογοτεχνική ανάλυση του *Βίου*, βλ. K. JAZDZEWSKA, Hagiographic Invention and Imitation: Niketas' Life of Theoktiste and its Literary Models, *GRBS* 49 (2009), 257-279 και I. NILSSON, The Same Story but Another: A Reappraisal of Literary Imitation in Byzantium, στο: *Imitatio–aemulatio–variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.-25. Oktober 2008)*, επιμ. A. RHOBY, E. SCHIFFER [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 402. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 21], Βιέννη 2010, 195-208.

πλήρως αποξενωμένη από τον κόσμο Θεοκτίστη δεν χρειάζεται να απεκδυθεί τα χαρακτηριστικά του φύλου της. Ο Νικήτας Μάγιστρος «χαλιναγωγεί» τις ακραίες αντιθέσεις της ιστορίας της Μαρίας και τις αναδιατυπώνει σε ηπιότερα μέτρα. Στην αφήγησή του η ερημίτισσα Θεοκτίστη δηλώνεται αμέσως ως γυναίκα, ενώ σχετική έμφαση δίδεται στη συνέχεια στην περιγραφή του σώματός της. Αντίθετα, η οσία Μαρία εισάγεται στην αφήγηση σαν φάντασμα, σαν σώμα απροσδιορίστου φύλου. Οι ομοιότητες και οι διαφορές που αποτυπώνουν τα παραπάνω γίνονται ευδιάκριτες στα αποσπάσματα που ακολουθούν:

Φάσμα δαιμονικὸν ὑποπτεύων ὁρᾶν, ... ὁρᾷ τινα κατὰ ἀλήθειαν βαδίζοντα· γυμνὸν δὲ ἦν τὸ ὁρώμενον, μέλαν τῷ σώματι, καὶ τρίχας ἔχοντα τῇ κεφαλῇ ὡσεὶ ἔριον, ... *...τότε ἐκεῖνον τὸ φεῦγον σῶμα φωνὴν τοιαύτην ἀφίησιν · ἀββᾶ Ζωσιμᾶ, συγχώρησόν μοι διὰ τὸν Κύριον, οὐ δύναμαι ἐπιστραφῆναι καὶ ὀφθῆναί σοι οὕτως εἰς πρόσωπον· γυνὴ γάρ εἰμι καὶ γυμνή, καθάπερ ὁρᾷς καὶ τὴν αἰσχύνην τοῦ σώματος ἀπερικάλυπτον ἔχουσα...*: *Βίος ἁγίας Μαρίας Αἰγυπτίας*, §11-12, *PG* 87/3, στ. 3775B-D.	*Ὡς δὲ προβὰς διαγνῶναι τὸ φαινόμενον ἠβουλήθην, ἤκουσα φωνῆς λεγούσης· «στῆθι μὴ προβῇς, ἄνθρωπε, πλέον μηδὲ πλησιάσῃς· αἰσχύνομαι γάρ, οὖσα γυνή, γυμνὴ θεαθῆναί σοι»...* *...μετὰ μικρὸν ὑποστρέψας ὁρῶ ταύτην ἔνθα καὶ πρὶν ἱσταμένην. Καὶ ἦν ἄρα τὸ μὲν σχῆμα γυνή, τὸ δὲ φαινόμενον ὑπεράνθρωπον· θρὶξ λευκή, πρόσωπον μέλαν, μικρὰν ὑπεμφαῖνον λευκότητα, δερματὶς συνέχουσα τὴν ὀστῶν ἁρμονίαν, ἥκιστα σαρκὸς ἐμπεφυκυίας, σκιᾷ παραπλήσιος, εἶδος μόνον τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην σῷζον ἐμφέρειαν...*: Νικήτα Μάγιστρου, *Βίος ἁγίας Θεοκτίστης Λεσβίας*, §12, *AASS*, Nov. IV, 228E.

Η Θεοκτίστη η Λεσβία αποτελεί τη μοναδική περίπτωση αγίας της εικονομαχικής και της μεταεικονομαχικής περιόδου την οποία ο Συμεών Μεταφραστής εντάσσει στο περίφημο *Μηνολόγιό* του[24]. Ο ικανός αριθμός γυναικών-αγίων που εντοπίζουμε εκεί δεν αφορά παρά σε αγίες που μαρτύρησαν ή έδρασαν στην προ του όγδοου αιώνα εποχή. Ο τρόπος με τον οποίο προσεγγίζει τη γυναικεία αγιότητα χρήζει ασφαλώς ιδιαίτερης μελέτης που δεν μπορεί να αναληφθεί εδώ. Πάντως η διαπίστωση μιας διαφορετικής προσέγγισης που

24. *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας καὶ ἀειμνήστου Θεοκτίστης τῆς Λεσβίας* (*BHG* 1723), έκδ. Θ. ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ, *Μνημεῖα ἁγιολογικά*, Βενετία 1884, 18-39.

«φέρνει τα πράγματα» σε πιο ανθρώπινα μέτρα θα ενίσχυε τη γενικότερη εντύπωση ενός πνεύματος εκκοσμίκευσης που γενικά τον χαρακτηρίζει[25].

Στα πρότυπα αυτά μοναστριών αγίων τα οποία κυριαρχούν από τα χρόνια της λύσης της πρώτης Εικονομαχίας (787), ο δέκατος αιώνας αντιτάσσει κυρίως τις ιδιαίτερα συζητημένες περιπτώσεις έγγαμης γυναικείας αγιότητας που με διαφορετικό τρόπο η καθεμία εγγράφεται στην ιστορική πραγματικότητα της εποχής. Όπως και στο χρονολογικά πρότερο παράδειγμα του αγίου Φιλαρέτου του Ελεήμονα (*BHG* 1511z), η φιλανθρωπία, όπως αυτή εκδηλώνεται εντός της κοινωνικής και όχι της μοναστικής ζωής, συντελεί καθοριστικά ως αρετή στη θεμελίωση της αγιότητας, ο τρόπος όμως ανάδειξης της γυναικείας έγγαμης αγιότητας συναρτάται στενά με τη συμπεριφορά του άλλου φύλου[26]. Ενώ ο *Βίος* της αυτοκράτειρας Θεοφανούς (*BHG* 1794) αντιπροσωπεύει άλλο ιδιαίτερο παράδειγμα αγιότητας που προάγεται από το οικογενειακό περιβάλλον, οι θεματικά συγγενείς *Βίοι* της Θωμαΐδος της Λεσβίας (*BHG* 2454) και της Μαρίας της Νέας (*BHG* 1164) κινούνται σε εντελώς διαφορετικό πεδίο: είναι κείμενα που καταγγέλλουν «ανοικτά» τη συζυγική-ανδρική βία σε τέτοιο βαθμό ώστε η θυματοποίηση ή το ενδοσυζυγικό μαρτύριο της αφιερωμένης σε έργα ευσεβείας γυναίκας να καθίστανται τα στοιχεία εκείνα που ουσιαστικά οικοδομούν την αγιότητα[27]. Μερικούς αιώνες αργότερα, την περίοδο των Παλαιολόγων, το

25. Βλ. σχετικά Chr. Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes. Rewriting and Canonization*, Copenhagen 2002, 173-204 (όπου ο κατάλογος των μεταφραστικών κειμένων). Για τις αντιλήψεις του Συμεών περί αγιότητος, βλ. M. Vasiljević, La conception de la sainteté dans l'œuvre hagiographique de Syméon Métaphraste, *RÉB* 66 (2008), 191-207.

26. Βλ. σχετικά St. Constantinou, Performing Gender in the Lives of Lay Saints, *BMGS* 38 (2014), 24-32. Έκδοση του *Βίου* του αγ. Φιλαρέτου: L. Rydén *The Life of St Philaretos the Merciful Written by his Grandson Niketas* [Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 8], Uppsala 2002. Βλ. επίσης M.-Fr. Auzépy, *De Philarète*, de sa famille et de certains monastères de Constantinople, στο: *Les saints et leur sanctuaire à Byzance: textes, images et monuments*, επιμ. C. Jolivet-Lévi, M. Kaplan, J.-P. Sodini [Byzantina Sorbonensia 11], Paris 1994, 113-132 [= Η Ιδια, *L'histoire des iconoclasts* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 15), 179-198]· και Στ. Ευθυμιαδης, Ὁ Βίος τοῦ ἁγίου Φιλαρέτου τοῦ Ἐλεήμονος καὶ ἡ ἐπιστροφὴ στὴ βιβλικὴ ἁπλότητα, *Δελτίο Βιβλικῶν Μελετῶν* 31Β (2016), 18-25.

27. *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας καὶ θαυματουργοῦ Θωμαΐδος* (έκδ. *AASS*, Nov. IV), 234-242 και *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τῆς μακαρίας καὶ ἀοιδίμου Μαρίας τῆς Νέας* (έκδ. *AASS*, Nov. IV), 692-705. Από μια πλούσια σχετική βιβλιογραφία παραπέμπουμε ενδεικτικά στις ακόλουθες μελέτες: Α. Λαϊου, Ἡ ἱστορία ἑνὸς γάμου: ὁ Βίος τῆς ἁγίας Θωμαΐδος τῆς Λεσβίας, στο: *Ἡ καθημερινὴ ζωὴ στὸ Βυζάντιο. Τομὲς καὶ συνέχειες στὴν ἑλληνιστικὴ καὶ ρωμαϊκὴ παράδοση*, επιμ. Χρ. Αγγελιδη, Αθήνα 1989, 236-251·

αγιολογικό ενδιαφέρον των τότε λογίων συγγραφέων δεν θα στραφεί προς τη λογοτεχνικά αρτιότερη και θεματολογικά πληρέστερη ιστορία, εκείνη της Μαρίας της Νέας, αλλά προς τις άλλες δύο.

Όπως και το σύνολο σχεδόν της λογοτεχνικής παραγωγής της εποχής, τα αγιολογικά κείμενα της υστεροβυζαντινής περιόδου φέρουν τα εμφανή διακριτικά μιας άκρας λογιότητας, εκείνης που χαρακτηρίζει τους σημαντικούς συγγραφείς που τα υπογράφουν. Η παλινόρθωση της Ορθοδοξίας ή μάλλον η υπερίσχυση της ανθενωτικής μερίδας έναντι της φιλενωτικής την εποχή της μακράς βασιλείας του Ανδρονίκου Β΄ (1282-1328), αλλά και αργότερα, η άνοδος επιρροής του μοναχισμού (ανδρικού και γυναικείου) στην Κωνσταντινούπολη και στη Θεσσαλονίκη, η υπεράσπιση της ησυχαστικής διδασκαλίας αργότερα, στάθηκαν οι βασικές αφορμές για τη δυναμική επανεμφάνιση της αγιολογίας, κυρίως για έναν περίπου αιώνα, από τα τέλη του δέκατου τρίτου έως τα τέλη του δέκατου τέταρτου αιώνα. Η εποχή στάθηκε ιδιαίτερα διστακτική στην ανακήρυξη νέων γυναικών-αγίων με τις εξαιρέσεις να περιορίζονται σε δύο και μόνο περιπτώσεις: τη Θεοδώρα αυτοκράτειρα της Άρτας (*BHG* 1736) και τη Ματρώνα της Χίου (*BHG* 1220)[28]. Δεν ήταν ωστόσο εξίσου φειδωλή στην εξύμνηση γυναικών-αγίων από το μακρινό ή το πιο πρόσφατο παρελθόν[29]. Έξι από τα 28 σωζόμενα αγιολογικά κείμενα του παραγωγικότατου Κωνσταντίνου Ακροπολίτη αφιερώνονται σε αγίες, ένα του Θεόδωρου Μετοχίτη, τρία του Νικηφόρου Ξανθόπουλου, δύο του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά, ένα του Γρηγορίου Παλαμά, δύο του Φιλόθεου Κόκκινου. Στους συγκεκριμένους λογίους πρέπει να προστεθεί και ο Ιωάννης Σταυράκιος, συγγραφέας που, έστω και αν ετίμησε

Κ. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, Παλινωδίες στη νομοθεσία των Μακεδόνων: η κακοποίηση των εγγάμων γυναικών και ο Βίος της Θωμαΐδος της Λεσβίας, *Σύμμεικτα* 16 (2003-2004), 101-113· CONSTANTINOU, *Female Corporeal Performances* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 1), 162-192.

28. *Βίος Θεοδώρας τῆς Ἄρτας*, *PG* 127, στ. 904-908. *Νείλου, μητροπολίτου Ρόδου, Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὴν ὁσίαν καὶ θαυματουργὸν Ματρῶναν* (έκδ. Δ. Ι. ΜΟΝΙΟΥ, Το Ἐγκώμιο καὶ ἡ ἀκολουθία στὴν ὁσία Ματρώνα τὴν Χιοπολίτιδα τοῦ Νείλου μητροπολίτου Ρόδου, *Παρεκβολαί* 5, 2015), 75-120.

29. Για την αγιολογική λογοτεχνία της εποχής, βλ. γενικά A.-M. TALBOT, Hagiography in Late Byzantium (1204-1453), στο: *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, τ. I: *Periods and Places*, επιμ. ST. EFTHYMIADIS, Farnham–Burlington 2011, 173-195. Η έλλειψη παραδειγμάτων αγίων-γυναικών για την περίοδο αυτή συναρτάται με την γενικότερη αριθμητική πτώση των περιπτώσεων γυναικείου μοναχισμού από τη Σ. ΜΕΡΤΙΑΛΗ-ΣΑΧΑ, *Γράφοντας Ιστορία με τους αγίους. Από την κοινωνία των αγίων στην κοινωνία των Παλαιολόγων (1261-1453)*, Αθήνα 2014, 85-88.

μια αγία της οποίας η δράση συνδέεται ιστορικά με την Κωνσταντινούπολη, φαίνεται να έζησε και να έδρασε αποκλειστικά στη Θεσσαλονίκη[30].

Πέρα από τις παραδοσιακές μορφές όπως είναι, για παράδειγμα, η Μαρία η Μαγδαληνή την οποία εξύμνησε ο Ξανθόπουλος, οι προαναφερθέντες λόγιοι επέδειξαν ζωηρό ενδιαφέρον και προς σπάνιες ή λιγότερο προφανείς περιπτώσεις αγίων γυναικών, όπως, λόγου χάριν, οι αγίες Επίχαρις και Ωραιοζήλα για τον Ακροπολίτη, η Ανυσία, μάρτυς της Θεσσαλονίκης, για τον Φιλόθεο Κόκκινο ή κάποιες άλλες αγίες της μεσοβυζαντινής περιόδου που τιμώνταν σε μονές και προσκυνήματα της Κωνσταντινούπολης. Η προσοχή όλων των συγγραφέων σταθερά στρέφεται προς τις μάρτυρες και τις έγγαμες αγίες. Δύο είναι οι βασικές και αξιοσημείωτες εξαιρέσεις γυναικών μοναχών αγίων που προσελκύουν το αγιολογικό ενδιαφέρον της εποχής και αφορούν σε περιπτώσεις που σχολιάστηκαν παραπάνω: η μοναχή Θεοδοσία στην οποία αφιερώνονται κείμενα του Κωνσταντίνου Ακροπολίτη και του Ιωάννου Σταυρακίου και η Θεοδώρα Θεσσαλονίκης την οποία εγκωμίασαν πρώτα ο Ιωάννης Σταυράκιος και ύστερα ο Νικόλαος Καβάσιλας. Θα σταθούμε εδώ στην πρώτη περίπτωση. Το τιτλοφορούμενο ως «Βίος και Μαρτύριον» έργο του Σταυρακίου και ο *Λόγος* του Ακροπολίτη παρουσιάζουν αξιοσημείωτες διαφορές ως προς τις αφηγηματικές τους εστιάσεις, έστω κι αν οι δυο ενδιαφέρονται τόσο για τον εγκωμιασμό της αγίας ως μοναχής, όσο και για την εξιστόρηση των γεγονότων που οδήγησαν στο μαρτύριό της. Αντίθετα με τον Ακροπολίτη, ο Σταυράκιος δίνει ιδιαίτερο βάρος στη μοναστική ιδιότητα της αγίας Θεοδοσίας που την θεωρεί προϋπόθεση της ηρωικής της στάσης στο επεισόδιο της Χαλκής Πύλης[31].

Γενικά, πάντως, οι λόγοι που οδηγούσαν σε τέτοιες επιλογές ήταν η προσπάθεια των ανθρώπων οι οποίοι παρήγγειλαν το εγκώμιο ή τον *Βίο* να αναδειχθεί περαιτέρω η φήμη της αγίας με αφορμή συνήθως την εορταστική

30. Για τον λόγιο αυτό, βλ. κυρίως Ε. ΚΟΥΝΤΟΥΡΑ ΓΑΛΑΚΗ, Ιωάννης Σταυράκιος: Ένας λόγιος στη Θεσσαλονίκη της πρώιμης Παλαιολόγειας εποχής, *Σύμμεικτα* 16 (2003-2004), 379-394.

31. Έκδοση των δύο κειμένων από την KOTZABASSI, *Das hagiographische Dossier der heiligen Theodosia*, 84-98, 123-140. Για μια παράλληλη ανάγνωση των δύο κειμένων σε σχέση με το ζήτημα της χρήσης πρότερων πηγών, βλ. E. KOUNTOURA GALAKE, Legend and Reality: The Case of Oikoumenikos Didaskalos in the Early Palaiologan period, στο: *Hypermachos. Studien zu Byzantinistik, Armenologie und Georgistik. Festschrift für Werner Seibt zum 65. Geburtstag*, επιμ. CHR. STAVRAKOS, A.-K. WASSILIOU, M. K. KRIKORIAN, Wiesbaden 2008, 173-186, ιδίως 178-186.

περίσταση, την ετήσια πανήγυρη προς τιμήν της αγίας. Άλλες φορές ωστόσο η παρόρμηση προερχόταν από τον προσωπικό παράγοντα ή μάλλον το προσωπικό βίωμα. Για τον *Λόγον εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θωμαΐδα* του Κωνσταντίνου Ακροπολίτη (*BHG* 2457) η παρόρμηση προήλθε από την *ἄνασσαν* που εγκωμιαστικά προσφωνεί ο συγγραφέας στις καταληκτικές φράσεις του, εκείνη που ανακαίνισε το ναό της αγίας στην Κωνσταντινούπολη:

> *... τὴν δ' εὐσεβῆ τε καὶ φιλόχριστον ἄνασσαν τὴν ἐκ φιλοθεΐας τόνδε τὸν νεὼν καὶ πλείστους ἄλλους, οὓς μὲν ἐρειπωθέντας ἀνακαινίσασαν, οὓς δὲ ἐκ βάθρων ἐγείρασαν...*[32].

Έχει εύλογα υποστηριχθεί ότι ο συγγραφέας υπαινίσσεται εδώ τη Θεοδώρα Παλαιολογίνα (+ 1303), χήρα του Μιχαήλ Η΄ Παλαιολόγου και μητέρα του Ανδρονίκου Β΄[33]. Ο Ακροπολίτης ουσιαστικά αντιγράφει πιστά τον πρότερο *Βίο* (*BHG* 2454) με έκδηλες τάσεις όμως βραχυλογίας. Μεταξύ των στοιχείων που απαλείφει όταν αντλεί από το πρωτότυπο είναι και οιαδήποτε αναφορά στην *infirmitas sexus*, δηλαδή στη γυναικεία αδυναμία για την οποία στερεότυπα κάθε υμνητής της γυναικείας αγιότητας πρέπει στο προοίμιο ή σε άλλα σημεία του κειμένου να κάνει λόγο. Η πρωτότυπη αυτή απουσία τέτοιων αναφορών πρέπει, κατά τα φαινόμενα, να αποδοθεί στο γεγονός ότι ο Ακροπολίτης εδώ απευθύνεται σε μια αυτοκράτειρα, συνεπώς θα ήταν τουλάχιστον άκομψο να υπενθυμίζει την εδραιωμένη αντίληψη περί γυναικείας κατωτερότητας.

Νέα ελεύθερη ανάπλαση της ιστορίας της αγίας Θωμαΐδας συναντούμε λίγα χρόνια αργότερα σε εκτενέστατο αγιολογικό έργο (*BHG* 2455) που μας έχει παραδοθεί ανώνυμα στον κώδικα *Atheniensis graecus 2104* της Εθνικής Βιβλιοθήκης της Ελλάδος[34]. Ο συγγραφέας αναφέρεται σε σοβαρό πρόβλημα υγείας που αντιμετώπιζε κατά την επιστροφή του από τη χώρα των Θετταλών, δηλαδή τη Μακεδονία, και στη θεραπεία του από τη θαυματόβρυτη σορό της

---

32. *Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θωμαΐδα* (έκδ. *AASS*, Nov. IV), §20, 246.

33. A.-M. Talbot, Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints' Lives in the Palaeologan Period, στο: *The Twilight of Byzantium. Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire. Papers from the Colloquium Held at Princeton University 8-9 May 1989*, επιμ. S. Ćurčić, D. Mouriki, Princeton, New Jersey 1991, 15-26 ιδίως 19 [= Η Ιδια, *Women and Religious Life* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), X)· επίσης Η Ιδια, Empress Theodora Palaiologina, Wife of Michael VIII, *DOP* 46 (1992), 295-303, ιδίως 300-301 (= Η Ιδια, *Women and Religious Life*, VI).

34. *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἐνδόξου θαυματουργοῦ Θωμαΐδος* (έκδ. Fr. Halkin, *Hagiologie byzantine. Textes inédits publiés en grec et traduits en français* [SubsHag 71], Bruxelles 1988), 185-217.

αγίας[35]. Όπως υποστήριξα σε άλλη δημοσίευση, ο συγγραφέας του κειμένου αυτού δεν είναι άλλος από τον Νικηφόρο Ξανθόπουλο, τον πολυγραφότατο λόγιο της αυλής του Ανδρονίκου Β΄[36]. Σε μια γραφή που διαπνέεται έντονα από τις κλασικιστικές τάσεις της εποχής ο Ξανθόπουλος αναπλάθει την ιστορία της ηρωίδας του θέτοντας σε αφηγηματική προτεραιότητα την αρνητική προσωπογράφηση του τυραννικού συζύγου και ερμηνεύοντας με όρους ψυχολογίας των ηρώων τις αποφάσεις και τη συμπεριφορά των δρώντων προσώπων. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, σε αντιδιαστολή με τον αρχικό *Bίο* (*BHG* 2454) έμφαση δίνεται στον χαρακτήρα του τυράννου-συζύγου ο οποίος σκιαγραφείται ως ανένδοτα βίαιος και αμετάπειστα σκληρός μέχρι το τέλος. Η κακή προαίρεση βαραίνει καθοριστικά στην όλη αρνητική συμπεριφορά του. Ευθύνες ωστόσο για τον αποτυχημένο γάμο επιμερίζονται και στους γονείς που βιάστηκαν να παντρέψουν τη μοναχοκόρη προσβλέποντας στην απόκτηση απογόνων. Πέραν τούτου, η απόφασή τους να μετοικήσουν από τη Λέσβο στην Κωνσταντινούπολη δεν παρατίθεται ως απλή αναφορά σε ένα συμβάν, αλλά ερμηνεύεται με τους ψυχολογικούς όρους της ενοχής των γονέων προς το παιδί τους και ως ενσυνείδητη προσπάθεια αλλαγής περιβάλλοντος ώστε να καμφθεί η αγριότητα του συζύγου. Για τον Ξανθόπουλο η Θωμαΐς αποτελεί τραγική μορφή την οποία ο ίδιος δεν μεταχειρίζεται με τα απλά και συνήθη αγιολογικά μέτρα, αλλά τη θεωρεί υπό το ευρύτερο πρίσμα της βίας των διαπροσωπικών σχέσεων.

Άλλο σημείο συνάντησης αλλά και απόστασης των δύο συγγραφέων εντοπίζεται και για την περίπτωση της αγίας Ευφροσύνης της Νέας στην οποία ο μεν Ακροπολίτης αφιερώνει ένα όχι ιδιαίτερα μακροσκελές εγκώμιο (*BHG* 627b), ο δε Ξανθόπουλος εκτενή βιογραφία που συμπληρώνεται με θαύματα της σύγχρονής του εποχής (*BHG* 627). Η Ευφροσύνη φέρεται να έζησε στα χρόνια της βασιλείας του Λέοντα Στ΄ του Σοφού (886-912) και να ασκήτεψε έξω από τα τείχη της Κωνσταντινούπολης στο δάσος που γειτόνευε με τη μονή της Θεοτόκου της Πηγής. Η πρόβλεψή της ότι ο Λέων δεν θα τελειώσει τη ζωή του άτεκνος, αλλά ότι θα αξιωθεί ενός γιού που θα τον διαδεχθεί, της προσέδωσαν τη φήμη αγίας που κυρίως θεράπευε τις γυναίκες από τα δεσμά της ατεκνίας. Ο Ακροπολίτης δεν ενδιαφέρεται ιδιαίτερα να τονίσει την ιστορικότητα της εγκωμιαζομένης και από παρανόηση θεωρεί ότι γενέτειρα της Ευφροσύνης

35. *Αυτόθι*, 211-212.

36. St. Efthymiadis, Une hagiographie classicisante et son auteur: la *Vie* longue de sainte Thomaïs de Lesbos (*BHG* 2455), στο: *"Pour une poétique de Byzance". Hommage à Vassilis Katsaros*, επιμ. St. Efthymiadis, Ch. Messis, P. Odorico, I. Polemis [Dossiers byzantins 16], Paris 2015, 103-122.

ήταν η Καλαβρία της Ιταλίας και όχι η Καλαβρία της Πελοποννήσου, δηλαδή το νησί του Πόρου[37]. Αντίθετα, το κείμενο του Ξανθόπουλου είναι πολύ περισσότερο «φροντισμένο», εφοδιασμένο με πλουσιότερες πληροφορίες και ιστορικά προσανατολισμένο[38]. Σημαντικές διαφορές εντοπίζονται και στον τρόπο με τον οποίο ανακατασκευάζονται κάποια συμβάντα. Παράλληλα ο Ξανθόπουλος τονίζει ιδιαίτερα το ασκητικό φρόνημα της ηρωίδας του που υπερκέρασε την αδυναμία της γυναικείας φύσης καθώς στην δεκαπενταετή παραμονή της σε ανδρικό μοναστήρι, μεταμφιεσμένη ως ευνούχος με το όνομα Ιωάννης, δεν απέφυγε καθόλου να ζει ανάμεσα σε άρρενες χωρίς ωστόσο να υποκύπτει στον οιοδήποτε πειρασμό[39]. Ιδιαίτερη έκταση καταλαμβάνει και η συνάντηση Ευφροσύνης και Λέοντα Στ΄, η οποία από τη μεριά της αγίας προσλαμβάνει στην αρχή χαρακτήρα παραινετικού λόγου εν είδει κατόπτρου ηγεμόνος για να εξελιχθεί σε διάλογο μεταξύ της αγίας και του αυτοκράτορα γύρω από το πρόβλημα της ατεκνίας του τελευταίου[40].

Διαφορετικές προτεραιότητες στον τρόπο με τον οποίο προσεγγίζεται η γυναικεία αγιότητα αναγνωρίζουμε και στους *Βίους* που συνέγραψε ο Νικηφόρος Γρηγοράς. Στο *Βίο καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας Βασιλίσσης* (*BHG* 2059), μάρτυρος της Νικομηδείας, αποφεύγει να μεταχειριστεί τη μάρτυρα απλώς με τα παγιωμένα μέτρα μιας γυναίκας που υπερβαίνει τη φυσική της αδυναμία. Αντίθετα τονίζει τη νεανική της ηλικία και αναδεικνύει την αποφασιστικότητα και το θάρρος της, στοιχεία που οδήγησαν στη μεταστροφή του τυράννου Αλεξάνδρου στη χριστιανική πίστη[41].

---

37. *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς ἁγίαν Εὐφροσύνην τὴν Νέαν* (έκδ. Fr. Halkin, Éloge de Ste Euphrosyne la Jeune par Constantin Acropolite, *Byz* 57, 1987), 56-65.

38. *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία καὶ μερικὴ θαυμάτων διήγησις τῆς ὁσίας μητρὸς ἡμῶν Εὐφροσύνης τῆς Νέας, τῆς ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει ἀσκησάσης, συγγραφεὶς παρὰ Νικηφόρου Καλλίστου τοῦ Ξανθοπούλου* (έκδ. *AASS*, Nov. III), 861-877. Για τη συλλογή θαυμάτων που συμπληρώνει τη βιογραφία της αγίας, βλ. St. Efthymiadis, Late Byzantine Collections of Miracles and their Implications, στο: *Οι Ήρωες της Ορθόδοξης Εκκλησίας. Οι Νέοι Άγιοι, 8ος-16ος αιώνας*, επιμ. Ε. Κουντουρα Γαλακη [Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών. Διεθνή Συμπόσια 15], Αθήνα 2004, 239-250 [= Ο Ιδιος, *Hagiography in Byzantium* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 7), XVI).

39. *Αυτόθι*, §9, 865.

40. *Αυτόθι*, §18-23, 868-870.

41. *Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τῆς ὁσίας Βασιλίσσης* (έκδ. S. Bezdechi, La Vie de Ste Basilisse par Nicéphore Grégoras, *Publications de l'Institut d'histoire générale de l'Université de Cluj* 1, 1927, 78-85). Ανάλυση του κειμένου αυτού από την Η. Παρασκευοπουλου, *Τα αγιολογικά έργα του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2012, 62-66.

Στο *Λόγον εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θεοφανὼ τὴν βασιλίδα* (*BHG* 2455), την πρώτη σύζυγο του Λέοντα Στ΄, ο συγγραφέας υπογραμμίζει την αξία της προαιρέσεως ως θεμελιώδη για την πνευματική τελείωση ενός ανθρώπου. Συντασσόμενος μάλιστα με τις ιδέες του Πλουτάρχου, τη θεωρεί υπέρτερη των πράξεων ενός ανθρώπου[42]. Κατά τη συνήθεια των λογίων συγγραφέων της εποχής εξαίρει εκτενώς τους δεσμούς της Θεοφανούς με δύο σπουδαίες πόλεις, την Κωνσταντινούπολη ως γενέτειρα και τη Ρώμη ως τόπο καταγωγής της οικογενείας της[43]. Ενώ αντλεί εκτενώς από τον *Βίο* της αγίας που γράφτηκε τον δέκατο αιώνα (*BHG* 2454), ο Γρηγοράς διαφοροποιείται από αυτόν σε αρκετά σημεία. Στο επεισόδιο της μυστικής εμπειρίας την οποία μέσω ενός ονείρου βιώνει η μικρή Θεοφανώ στη μονή των Βάσσου δεν ενδιαφέρεται να κάνει μνεία της εικόνας της Θεομήτορος στην οποία προσέφυγε ικετευτικά η αγία. Γράφοντας σε απόσταση από τη μεταεικονομαχική περίοδο, εστιάζει τον αφηγηματικό φακό του αποκλειστικά στην περιγραφή της ίδιας της μυστικής εμπειρίας και του φωτός που την περιέβαλε, σημείων που προμήνυαν τον μετέπειτα θαυμαστό της βίο[44].

Επιχειρώντας καινοτόμες προσεγγίσεις σε δεδομένες αγιολογικές ιστορίες που αφορούσαν σε ξεχωριστές χριστιανές του παρελθόντος ο Ακροπολίτης, ο Ξανθόπουλος, ο Γρηγοράς και άλλοι λόγιοι του ύστερου Βυζαντίου είχαν να αντιμετρηθούν με την ίδια πρόκληση που σε κάθε παραδοσιακή ή προνεοτερική κοινωνία αντιπροσώπευαν οι γυναίκες που, με τον έναν ή τον άλλο τρόπο, αποδεσμεύονται από τις πάγιες συντεταγμένες του βίου τους: το σπίτι, την

---

42. *Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θεοφανὼ τὴν βασιλίδα* (έκδ. E. KURTZ, Zwei griechische Texte über die Hl. Theophano, die Gemahlin Kaisers Leo VI, *Mémoires de l'Académie Impériale de S. Pétersbourg*, 8ᵉ série III/2, Αγία Πετρούπολη 1898, 25-45), §2, 26. Ανάλυση του κειμένου και ανάδειξη των αφηγηματικών του στοιχείων από τον M. HINTERBERGER, Les Vies des saints du XIVe siècle en tant que biographie historique: l'œuvre de Nicéphore Grégoras, στο: *Les Vies des saints à Byzance. Genre littéraire ou biographie historique?. Actes du IIe colloque international philologique «ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ», Paris, 6-7-8 juin 2002*, επιμ. P. ODORICO, P. A. AGAPITOS [Dossiers byzantins 4], Paris 2004, 285-294. Για το ίδιο κείμενο, βλ. επίσης ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Τα αγιολογικά έργα του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 41), 84-98 και Ε. Ν. ΑΜΟΙΡΙΔΟΥ, *Ἁγία Θεοφανὼ ἡ βασιλίς. Η ζωή μιας αυτοκράτειρας, ο βίος μιας αγίας*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2006, 37-42.

43. *Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θεοφανὼ τὴν βασιλίδα* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 42), § 4-5, 27-28. Για τα εγκώμια πόλεων όπως ενσωματώνονται στα αγιολογικά κείμενα της περιόδου αυτής, βλ. H. SARADI, The City in Byzantine Hagiography, στο: *The Ashgate Research Companion*, τ. II (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 1), 437-442.

44. *Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν Θεοφανὼ τὴν βασιλίδα* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 42), §11, 33.

οικογένεια αλλά και τη «φυσική» αδυναμία που, με τη χριστιανική θεώρηση, συχνά ισοδυναμούσε με «έμφυτη» ροπή προς την αμαρτία. Από τη μεριά του, ο αγιολογικός λόγος, σε μεγάλο βαθμό τυποποιημένος πλέον, εξύφανε για αυτές τις δικές του δεσμεύσεις που αυτοί ειδικά οι λόγιοι της Παλαιολόγειας περιόδου αντιπαρήλθαν όχι με περαιτέρω προσφυγή στη μυθοπλασία και στην υπερβολή, στοιχεία που κυριάρχησαν στην ύστερη αρχαιότητα και σε μικρότερο έστω βαθμό στο μέσο Βυζάντιο, αλλά με τα μέτρα μιας έλλογης ρητορικής που αφενός δεν παραγνώριζε τις κοινωνικές πραγματικότητες της εποχής τους, αφετέρου συντασσόταν απόλυτα με τα φιλοσοφικά-θεολογικά τους πιστεύω και τις αισθητικές τους προτιμήσεις.

NIKE KOUTRAKOU*

Politics, Strategies and Women in Byzantium (11th-13th centuries)

I. Setting the stage: women in positions of power from the eleventh century onwards

Women in positions of power or involved in politics, in general, were not unknown in Byzantium. Empresses and other female members of the imperial family represent the most prominent example of female leadership throughout Byzantine history. The best evidence for what the Byzantines considered worthy of appreciation in a woman is the metaphor for the *Imperium Romanum* (*Ρωμαίων ἀρχή*) which the twelfth/thirteenth-century historian Niketas Choniates used linking the concept of power to female imagery. In his revised text, composed after the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders[1] and the subsequent disintegration and transformation of the Byzantine Empire[2], in the

* Independent scholar. External Collaborator of the Institute of Historical Research / The National Hellenic Research Foundation.

1. Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin-New York 1975 = Choniates, *History*), vol. I, XCIX-CI; A. SIMPSON, Before and After 1204. The Versions of Nicetas Choniates' "Historia", *DOP* 60 (2006), 189-221.

2. The relevant bibliography is extensive. See among others P. MAGDALINO, The Byzantine Empire 1118-1204, in: *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. by D. LUSCOMBE and J. RILEY-SMITH, vol. IV/2, Cambridge 2008, 627-634; A. LAIOU, Byzantium and the Crusades in the Twelfth Century: Why Was the Fourth Crusade Late in Coming?, in: *Urbs Capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences*, ed. by EADEM [Réalités byzantines 10], Paris 2005, 17-40; D. KYRITSES, *The Byzantine Aristocracy in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Century*, Harvard University PhD, Cambridge Ma 1997, esp. 75-141 who stressed the relevant political power of local aristocracies; T. SHAWCROSS, The Lost Generation (c.1204-c.1222). Political Allegiance and Local Interests under the Impact of the Fourth Crusade, in: *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, ed. by J. HERRIN and G. SAINT-GUILLAIN, Farnham 2011, 9-45; A. KALDELLIS, *Hellenism*

full knowledge of what led to that catastrophic event[3], Choniates depicted the Empire as a woman "all-blessed, nobly beautiful, shapely and comely"[4].

He elaborated on the female metaphor to castigate those who had gained power by dishonourable means and then misused their power such that the beautiful lady –the Empire– had been turned into an ugly and abused prostitute[5].

The metaphor served to stress the author's view on the ethics of authority and power by depicting the rulers, pretenders and usurpers involved in the power struggles of the time, as rapists of the beautiful woman who represented the Empire and the imperial rule. Choniates' description and his bitter account of the stately woman's sufferings, as well as the comparison of her to Penelope, Ulysses' faithful wife, are indicative of the specific features of the female imagery employed by the Byzantines. The particular value of this description, however, lies in the connection of the female image to imperial power itself. The author could naturally draw upon the relevant ideological/literary tradition which presented Constantinople, the imperial city, as the fountain of abundance and

---

in Byzantium. The Transformations of Greek Identity and the Reception of the Classical Tradition, Cambridge–New York 2007, 317-388. On the establishment of Western powers in the Aegean and its consequences after 1204 and during the thirteenth century, see G. SAINT-GUILLAIN, Les conquérants de l'archipel: l'Empire Latin de Constantinople, Venise et les premiers seigneurs des Cyclades, in: *Quarta Crociata. Venezia–Bisanzio–Impero Latino*, ed. by GH. ORTALLI, G. RAVEGNANI and P. SCHREINER, Venice 2006, vol. I, 125-237. On the ideological currents that prevailed at the time, see the fundamental remarks by H. AHRWEILER, *L'idéologie politique de l'Empire byzantin*, Paris 1975, 101-114. See also A. CARILE, Basileia e principati locali (secoli XII-XIII), in: *Ecumene e città. Impero e localizzazioni da Roma a Costantinopoli a Mosca*, XXIV Seminario Internazionale di Studi "da Roma alla Terza Roma" 21-23.04.2004 = IDEM, *Teologia Politica Bizantina*, Spoleto 2008, 91-110.

3. On the situation prevailing in the Empire during the last twenty years of the twelfth century, building up towards the milestone year of 1204, see among others the still crucial study of C. M. BRAND, *Byzantium Confronts the West 1180-1204*, Cambridge Ma. 1968; M. ANGOLD, Byzantine Politics vis-à-vis the Fourth Crusade, in: *Urbs Capta* (as in footnote 2), 55-68 and most recently, the papers in: *Byzantium, 1180-1204: "The Sad Quarter of a Century?"*, ed. by A. SIMPSON [NHRF/Institute of Historical Research. Section of Byzantine Research. International Symposium 22], Athens 2015.

4. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 498.35-36: *γυναικὸς πανευδαίμονος, σεμνῆς τὸ κάλλος, εὐφυοῦς τὸ μέγεθος, εὐπρεποῦς τὴν ὄψιν*; Engl. transl. by H. J. MAGOULIAS, *O City of Byzantium, Annals of Niketas Choniates*, Detroit 1984, 274.

5. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 498-499.

felicity for the Empire and the world[6] and the visual imagery of a City's *Tyche* (*Fortuna Urbis*), following Hellenistic and Roman precedents, as a crowned queen[7]. In this case, though, the metaphor implied a violation of the woman/Empire. Perhaps this was a-none-too subtle allusion to the role of women in the politics of the time, which the author may have seen as having weakened the imperial authority, making it easy prey to everyone and vulnerable to every form of misrule.

At any event, Choniates' allusion to Penelope recalled the popular traditional Byzantine perception that women's primary place and role in life was defined by their position within marriage and the family[8]. In conformity with

6. G. DAGRON, L'œcuménicité politique: droit sur l'espace, droit sur le temps, in: *Το Βυζάντιο ως Οικουμένη*, ed. by E. CHRYSOS [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. International Symposium 16], Athens 2005, 47-57, esp. 49.

7. The *Tyche* of a City (Fortuna Urbis) was usually represented as a lady with a mural crown, or modius, for instance on coins such as the silver drachma of Argos during 370-350BC. On the initially diverse iconographical attributes of the Hellenistic Greek *Tyche* and the Roman *Fortuna* (cornucopia, mural crown, globe, rudder, wheel etc.), their development and standardisation, see D. A. ARYA, *The Goddess Fortuna in Imperial Rome: Cult, Art, Text*, PhD Diss., Univ. of Texas at Austin, 2002, 68-93. On the mural crown headgear, *ibidem*, 16-17, 21-24, 75.

8. On the conventions governing womanly behaviour in a society dominated by male authority at the time, see L. GARLAND, The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women: A Further Note on Conventions of Behaviour and Social Reality as Reflected in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Historical Sources, *Byz* 58 (1988), 361-393; *Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium*, ed. by L. JAMES, London–New York 1997; L. GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses: Women and Power in Byzantium AD 527-1204*, New York 1999. B. HILL, *Imperial Women in Byzantium 1025-1204: Power, Patronage and Ideology*, Harlow 1999, esp. 10-28. C. CONNOR, *Women of Byzantium*, New Haven–London, 2004, 163. K. NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα στη Μέση Βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αγιολογικά κείμενα* [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. Monographs 6], Athens 2005, esp. 317-324; D. C. SMYTHE, Middle-Byzantine Family Values in Anna Komnene's *Alexiad*, in: *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience AD 800-1200*, ed. by L. GARLAND, Aldershot 2006, 125-139. R. MORRIS, Idéaux et préjugés: la femme dans l'imagination culturelle byzantine des Xe-XIe siècles, in: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes à Byzance et en Occident (VIe-XIe siècles)*, ed. by S. LEBECQ, A. DIERKENS, R. LE JAN and J.-M. SANSTERRE, Lille 1999, 133-147. ST. MCGRATH, Women in Byzantine History in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries: Some Theoretical Considerations, in: *Byzantine Religious Culture. Studies in Honor of Alice Mary Talbot*, ed. by D. SULLIVAN, E. FISHER and STR. PAPAIOANNOU [The Medieval Mediterranean 92], Leiden 2012, 85-98.

this general perception of women, Byzantine authors usually stressed the role of women in leading positions within the kin and underlined their importance in marriage negotiations. Even then, the usually acknowledged political purpose for women was an indirect one, a role "behind the scenes". Any advice they eventually offered was recorded according to the perception of the male recipient (not to say of the usually male writer himself) and according to the action that person might have taken or failed to take based on such advice.

When female power was placed in the foreground, whether in the context of women in direct positions of power, or wielding indirect power as secondary members of imperial or aristocratic households, it was often perceived within the context of family strategies. They were guarantors of agreements forming marriage alliances between powerful families, seeking or offering support in their rise to power, or helping consolidate the family's prominent position once achieved. Without a doubt, the same applied to negotiated diplomatic marriages between Byzantium and foreign powers, a function for female members of the imperial household that constituted an integral part of Byzantine foreign policy.

This function of upper-class women constituted one of the traditional features of political activity and helped develop an appreciation of the female contribution to male power precisely through the consolidation of alliances within family strategies. For Anna Komnene, there were three principal modes of acquiring power: noble birth, hegemonic rulership and marriage (*ἐκ γένους, ἐκ τυραννίδος, ἐξ ἀγχιστείας*). The Byzantine princess and writer made this observation in reference to Robert Guiscard's marriage arrangements for his three daughters. She made no secret of her appreciation of Guiscard's astuteness and political sense. Anna is explicit on the subject, stating that all three marriages were negotiated by the Norman leader to his advantage and were used, among other means, with the sole purpose of enhancing his power[9]. Her statement

9. Anna Komnene, *Ἀλεξιάς* (ed. D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias* [CFHB 40/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 2001 = *Alexias*), I.12.11: vol. I, 43.67-78. F. Burgarella, Roberto il Guiscardo e Bisanzio, in: *Roberto il Guiscardo tra Europa, Oriente e Mezzogiorno, Atti del Convegno internazionale di studio promosso dall'Università degli studi della Basilicata in occasione del IX centenario della morte di Roberto il Guiscardo (Potenza-Melfi-Venosa, 19-23.10.1985)*, ed. by C. D. Fonseca, Galatina 1990, 39-60, esp. 51-52. On Anna's style in describing her characters as a sum of traits in relation to standards, as she did for Guiscard, see J. Ljubarskij, Why is *Alexiad* a Masterpiece of Byzantine Literature?, in: *ΛΕΙΜΩΝ, Studies Presented to Lennart Rydén on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. by J. O. Rosenqvist [Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 6], Uppsala 1996,

denoted a solid awareness as to the role of family and its female components in acquiring power.

Marriage alliances were a traditional mode to gain power and was valid both in cases of aristocratic houses and States[10]. Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos stated in his famous tenth-century manual *De administrando imperio* the conditions under which a member of the Byzantine imperial family could marry a foreigner, in particular of Frankish origin. According to the official Byzantine ideology, Franks were indeed the only ones permitted in such alliances[11]. These conditions were still valid in the eleventh century, although their ideological power never impeded more realistic marriage alliances such as that of the Porphyrogenneta Anna to the prince of Kiev in 989. Marriage negotiations between Byzantium and foreign powers occurred before and after Constantine's statement and have been analysed from various perspectives such as kinship ties and diplomatic contacts in the context of the Empire's military and/or foreign policy[12].

127-141, esp. 138-139. Anna certainly appreciated how Guiscard consolidated his power through diplomatic marriages of his daughters to Southern Italian magnates. One daughter was married to Raimond son of count *Βραχεῶνος*, the other to the count *Εὔβουλος* and the third was Olympias/Helen, the bride of Constantine Doukas, son of emperor Michael VII Doukas. On Olympias, see V. VON FALKENHAUSEN, Olympias eine normannische Prinzessin in Konstantinopel, in: *Bisanzio e l'Italia. Raccolta di Studi in memoria di Agostino Pertusi* [Scienze filologiche e letteratura 22], Milano 1982, 56-72; H. BIBICOU, Une page d'histoire de Byzance au XIe siècle: Michel VII Doukas, Robert Guiscard et la pension des dignitaires, *Byz* 29-30 (1959-60), 43-75.

10. See for instance, I. BROUSELLE, Les stratégies matrimoniales de l'aristocratie byzantine aux IXe et Xe siècles, in: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes* (as in footnote 8), 51-61.

11. Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *Πρὸς τὸν ἴδιον υἱὸν Ῥωμανόν* (ed. GY. MORAVCSIK and R. J. H. JENKINS, *Constantine Pophyrogenitus, De administrando Imperio* [CFHB 1], Washington, D. C. 1967), 71-73. See N. DROCOURT, *Diplomatie sur le Bosphore. Les ambassadeurs étrangers dans l'Empire byzantin des années 640 à 1204*, vols I-II, Louvain 2015, here at vol. I, 9 note 34; IDEM, Francs vus par les Byzantins, in: *Les Barbares*, ed. by BR. DUMÉZIL, Paris 2016, 597-602, esp. 597.

12. From the vast relevant bibliography, see, among others, R. MACRIDES, Dynastic Marriages and Political Kinship, in: *Byzantine Diplomacy. Papers from the Twenty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Cambridge, March 1990*, ed. by J. SHEPARD and S. FRANKLIN [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 1], Aldershot 1992, 263-280; FR. TINNEFELD, Byzantinische auswärtige Heiratspolitik vom 9. bis zum 12. Jahrhundert. Kontinuität und Wandel der Prinzipien und der praktischen Ziele, in: *Byzantium and its Neighbours from the mid-9th till the 12th Centuries. Papers Read at the*

For Byzantium, such alliances aimed primarily to maintain peaceful relations, to safeguard the interests of the Empire with a foreign foe or an ally, or even to turn a possible foe into an ally[14]. Niketas Choniates is eloquent on the subject, when he explains the political necessity that urged emperor Alexios Angelos in the late twelfth century to plan second marriages for his two widowed daughters to potentially hostile foreign Christian rulers[15]. Every diplomatic marriage depended upon the circumstances and the power balance at the time. Fear might sometimes provide the driving force behind the search for marriage alliances, as in the above instance. However, in this case, the emperor ultimately changed his plans, and married the two princesses into the local aristocracy with a great deal of pomp and ceremony[16]. Such turns of events are indicative of the complexity that governed marital alliances during the troubled times of the last quarter of the twelfth century.

Critical comments on imperial marriages –foreign or otherwise– were common in Byzantine texts, although they often depended on the author's point of view and personal allegiance[17]. However, they gradually lessened in intensity and number. Psellos, the eleventh-century historian and statesman[18], was quite

---

International Byzantinological Symposium, Bechyně, September 1990, ed. by VL. VAVŘÍNEK = *BSl* 54 (1993), 21-28. See also the extensive monograph by A. PANAGOPOULOU, *Οι διπλωματικοί γάμοι στο Βυζάντιο (6ος-12ος αιώνας)*, Athens 2006. DROCOURT, *Diplomatie* (as in footnote 11), vol. I, 93, 97-98; vol. II, 721.

13. MACRIDES, Dynastic Marriages (as in footnote 12), 273.

14. VL. STANKOVIĆ, Stronger than It Appears? Byzantium and its European Hinterland after the Death of Manuel I Komnenos, in: *Byzantium, 1180-1204* (as in footnote 3), 35-48, esp. 37-38.

15. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 508.77-78: *καὶ δυνάστας ἐξελέγετο τὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν πρεσβεύοντας, οὓς ὡς πολεμίους ἦν δεδιώς.*

16. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 508.78-81: *ὀψὲ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων σκεμμάτων μεθαρμοσθεὶς Ῥωμαίοις αὐτὰς ἐκδέδωκε, τὴν μὲν Εἰρήνην συνάψας τῷ Παλαιολόγῳ Ἀλεξίῳ, (...) τὴν δ' Ἄνναν συνηρμόκει Θεοδώρῳ τῷ Λάσκαρι, νεανίᾳ τολμητίᾳ καὶ ραγδαίῳ πρὸς ἔργα πολέμια.* On the imperial feasts prepared on the occasion of these marriages, see L. GARLAND, Imperial Women and Entertainment at the Middle Byzantine Court, in: *Byzantine Women* (as in footnote 8), 177-191, here at 185.

17. As for instance Skylitzes' favourable attitude towards Romanos III and his marriage to empress Zoe: A. LAIOU, Imperial Marriages and their Critics in the Eleventh Century: The Case of Scylitzes, *DOP* 46 (1992), 165-176, esp. 169, 172-173.

18. On Psellos' works and critical observations on Byzantine rulers, see A. KARPOZILOS, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι (11ος-12ος αι.)*, vol. III, Athens 2009, 59-185. J. LJUBARSKIJ, *Mihajl Psell: Ličnost' i tvorčestvo: k istorii vizantijskogo predgumanizma*,

critical of emperor Constantine IX Monomachos' intention to marry and crown a Georgian (Alan) hostage princess after the death of empress Zoe in 1055[19]. Nevertheless, Manuel I's marriage to Bertha/Eirene von Sulzbach[20] in 1146 did not elicit comment, apart from the fact that, in order to match Manuel's rank she had to be adopted by her sister's husband, the German emperor Conrad III, and become an imperial princess herself.

Indeed, criticisms of such alliances never disappeared entirely, especially when reasons that were not purely political prevailed. In the fourteenth century, Kantakouzenos commented on the unwillingness of emperor Andronikos III to marry one of his daughters to a Bulgarian prince, because the Byzantine princess, accustomed to imperial customs, habits, and laws of the Greeks (*ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις ἑλληνικοῖς ἐντεθραμμένη καὶ βασιλικοῖς*)[21] would not be happy

---

Moscow 1978, Greek transl. by A. Tzelesi, *Η προσωπικότητα και το έργο του Μιχαήλ Ψελλού. Συνεισφορά στην ιστορία του βυζαντινού ουμανισμού*, Athens 2004, passim. J. C. Riedinger, Quatre étapes de la vie de Michel Psellos, *RÉB* 68 (2010), 5-60; most recently on Psellos' literary style and modes of expression, see Fr. Lauritzen, *The Depiction of Character in Psellos' Chronographia*, [Byzantios. Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization 7], Turnhout 2013, 113-141; Str. Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2013; Idem, Voice, Signature, Mask: the Byzantine Author, in: *The Author in Middle Byzantine Literature: Modes, Functions and Identities*, ed. by A. Pizzone [Byzantinisches Archiv 28], Berlin 2014, 21-40.

19. Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. D. R. Reinsch, *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia* [Millennium Studies 51/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–Boston 2014 = Psellos, *Chronography*), VI, 153.1: vol. I, 176: *ἐβούλετο μὲν οὖν ταύτην καὶ βασιλικῇ ἀναδῆσαι ταινίᾳ*. On empress Zoe, see, among others, Garland, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 136-157.

20. On the marriage alliance as a move in the foreign relations of the two Empires, see Panagopoulou, *Διπλωματικοί γάμοι* (as in footnote 12), 258-274. On Bertha von Sulzbach (+1160), sister in law and adopted daughter (on the insistence of the Byzantine side for protocol reasons) of the German emperor Conrad III, see W. Blum, Bertha-Irene: bayerische Gräfin und byzantinische Kaiserin, in: *Bayern und die Antike. 150 Jahre Maximilians-Gymnasium in München*, ed. by W.-A. Freiherr von Reitzenstein, Munich 1999, 65-76. J. Irmscher, Bertha von Sulzbach, Gemahlin Manuels I, *BF* 22 (1996), 279-290. On Bertha's role in strengthening Byzantine ties with Conrad during the Second Crusade and the negotiations for a marriage alliance between Manuel I's niece Theodora and Conrad III's nephew Henry, see P. Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 52, n. 93. Laiou, Byzantium and the Crusades (as in footnote 2), 30-32.

21. John Kantakouzenos, *Ἱστοριῶν Βιβλία Δ΄* (ed. L. Schopen, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1828-1832 = Kantakouzenos, *History*), vol. I, 504.24-505.2: *τὴν παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις διατριβὴν εἰδὼς οὐκ ἐσομένην πρὸς*

residing among foreigners. However, such criticisms withered as marriages grew in importance as a tool of Byzantine diplomacy and a significant number of foreign marriage alliances were concluded during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries[22]. Byzantine princesses married abroad, and a stream of foreign brides participated in the affairs of the Byzantine state, often wielding personal power in the same way as Byzantine noblewomen related to the imperial family.

This acceptance coincided with the growing empowerment of women during the Komnenian period and after 1204, including within the institution of marriage. The importance of intermarriage as a political tool was also reflected in the struggle between State and Church for a higher degree of control over marriage legislation[23]. Laws could relax or strengthen impediments to matrimony; Manuel I's ruling of 1166 on prohibited degrees could be used for instance as a pretext for the dissolution or avoidance of an alliance whenever a diplomatic marriage was no longer politically interesting[24]. The practice continued in Late Byzantium[25].

Women, who had always been part of the power game in dynastic and family relationships[26], became more active agents and consolidated their position during the Byzantine government in exile 1204-1261 and the early Palaiologan period. Nonetheless, the authors of the time rarely mentioned female perspectives on these events. The aim here is to address the dynamics that governed female leadership in the context of strategies and policies between the eleventh and the thirteenth/early fourteenth century. In other words, I aim to search as far as possible for the reactions of powerful women through facts

---

ἡδονὴν τοῖς ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις Ἑλληνικοῖς ἐντεθραμμένη καὶ βασιλικοῖς. See U. V. Bosch, *Kaiser Andronikos III. Palaiologos: Versuch einer Darstellung der byzantinischen Geschichte in der Jahren 1321-1341*, Amsterdam 1965, 81, n. 1.

22. Panagopoulou, *Διπλωματικοὶ γάμοι* (as in footnote 12), 410-417.

23. A. Laiou, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XI-XIII siècles* [Travaux et Mémoires. Monographies 7], Paris 1992, 21-66.

24. M. Angold, *Church and Society in Byzantium under the Comneni (1081-1261)*, Cambridge 1995, 27, 39, esp. 106. For another point of view, see Magdalino, *Manuel I* (as in footnote 22), 201-217.

25. D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*, Cambridge 2007, 397. See also N. Koutrakou, Summit Diplomacy with a Female Face: Women as Diplomatic Actors in Late Byzantium, in: *Les relations diplomatiques byzantines (IV'-XV' siècles): permanance et/ou changements, Round Table of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, Belgrade 2016 (article forthcoming).

26. J. Herrin, *Women in Purple. Rulers of Medieval Byzantium*, London 2001, 240-257.

and indirect comments, –primarily found in the work of male authors. Were women ordered into given roles or did they have any say in the forming of policies? Were they active political and diplomatic players or intelligent vehicles for the implementation of particular strategies? Did their gender and/or their nationality or origin, as the case might be, play a specific role, even a secondary one, or was it subsumed by the family or dynastic strategy? Moreover, did leading women use their roles to their own benefit and to the benefit of their families? Did they rationalise it by particular care for the State, at least nominally?

I will discuss the issues involved by using specific examples of upper-class women in positions of power during the period in question, as well as through case studies. At the same time, I will focus both on women related to the imperial family or moving in the circles of power and on the empresses themselves. This traditional choice is somewhat imposed[27] since the women under investigation were those who could have an impact on the Empire's politics. It does not, however, mean that every single one of the imperial ladies did so, since personalities and circumstances also played a role. We should also keep in mind that the relevant references are somewhat haphazard and often depend upon contemporary authors' personal inclinations and/or prejudices, political allegiances and the groups[28] with which they identified themselves. Furthermore, the literary techniques and characterisation methods employed by the authors may have shaped subsequent portrayals of particular persons[29].

---

27. On methodological issues into Byzantine social history, see A. KALDELLIS, The Study of Women and Children: Methodological Challenges and New Directions, in: *The Byzantine World*, ed. by P. STEPHENSON, London–New York 2010, 61-71; on the role of empresses, imperial brides and ladies of the imperial family as integral part of the Byzantine court and public life, see É. MALAMUT, L'impératrice byzantine et la cour (XIIIe-XVe siècle), *ZRVI* 50 (2013) = *Mélanges Ljubomir Maksimović*, 645-661.

28. *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. by M. ANGOLD [British Archaeological Reports. International Series 221], Oxford 1984; K. P. MATSCHKE and FR. TINNEFELD, *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz. Gruppen, Strukturen und Lebensformen*, Cologne–Weimar–Vienna 2001, 47-48, 51, 163; P. MAGDALINO, Court Society and Aristocracy, in: *The Social History of Byzantium*, ed. by J. F. HALDON, Malden, Ma–Oxford 2009, 212-32. See also several comments by A. SIMPSON, *Niketas Choniates, A Historiographical Study*, Oxford 2013, 24-67 on the author's diverse portrayal of various characters in the first and the revised versions of his history and his relevant allegiance to Komnenian/Angeloi imperials and their allied noble families, implied by that allegiance.

29. R. J. LILIE, Reality and Invention: Reflections on Byzantine Historiography, *DOP* 68 (2014), 157-210, esp. 207-208.

An author's viewpoint could also change through the fluctuation of the political events involving women in power and the consequences of this development for the writer's life. Thus, the paper addresses some specific features of female empowerment from the eleventh to the thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries, the evolution of such empowerment, and the negative, positive, or ambivalent recognition it received. At the same time, the paper aims to determine the strategies and tactics involved.

This paper argues that since women were active players in family life and were perceived as such, the most crucial involvement of several noblewomen in state politics during the Komnenian period happened precisely because of their role and position in the ruling family. Since family ties and kinship tended to play a significant role in the politics of the Empire after the eleventh century, the female nobility and women of the imperial family also assumed a more active role both in internal affairs and in diplomatic/familial alliances. The Empire was governed by the extended imperial family and much to that family's benefit, as stated by contemporary historians like Zonaras[30]. That means that women of aristocratic origin and connections –especially those of the imperial kin or those moving in the imperial circle and its periphery– could exercise more influence on imperial politics through their kin while staying within the traditional boundaries of female behaviour. Zonaras did not specifically refer to imperial women when he mentioned the lavish gifts and privileges Alexios I granted to his relatives. However, he had previously mentioned empress Eirene, contrasting her imperious royal bearing to her husband's more "humane" behaviour and affability. The open and increasing female power held by several strong-willed and well-educated imperial women at the court of Alexios I might have influenced the historian's negative assessment of that emperor's reign. It was not unknown in Byzantium for an emperor to grant favours, riches and posts conducive to power to male relatives, and the practice continued till the

30. The historian John Zonaras (*Ἐπιτομὴ Ἱστοριῶν*, ed. Th. Büttner-Wobst, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitomae Historiarum, Libri XIII-XVIII* [CSHB], vol. III, Bonn 1897 = Zonaras, *History*) writing in the twelfth century is highly critical of Alexios I Komnenos for ruling the Empire as a private family estate and granting his relatives and friends exorbitant sums from the State revenues, despite giving him some credit for his overall reign: *ibidem*, 766.14-16: *καὶ τοῖς πράγμασιν οὐχ ὡς κοινοῖς οὐδ' ὡς δημοσίοις ἐκέχρητο καὶ ἑαυτὸν οὐκ οἰκονόμον ἤγητο τούτων, ἀλλὰ δεσπότην, καὶ οἶκον οἰκεῖον ἐνόμιζε καὶ ὠνόμαζε τὰ βασίλεια*. See M. Angold, The Byzantine Political Process at Crisis Point, in: *The Byzantine World* (as in footnote 27), 5-33, esp. 27.

end of the Empire[31]. Doing the same for female relatives was another story. At any rate, since women were seen as those principally caring for the family and actively seeking protection for its members[32], their role and sphere of action and influence adapted accordingly where family and Empire's interests intertwined.

II. Leading from behind: staying within the boundaries of traditional female behaviour

IIa. Distrust towards women in general and women in power in particular. Beauty and fear of manipulation.

Even on a cursory reading of Byzantine histories and chronicles of the period under discussion, the distrust shown towards women in leading positions is immediately noticeable. Traditionally, the most prominent female feature highlighted by the authors was beauty and not intellect. However, even beauty was often depicted as a kind of trap laid for humankind by the daughters of Eve, and as a cause of discord and deterioration.

The proverbial phrase *γυνὴ στρατηγεῖ* (a woman serves as general) used for an unusual situation that comes to a sad end epitomises this distrust, which goes back to both classical and biblical tradition. The "Corpus of Byzantine Collections of Proverbs"[33] recorded several proverbs on women as causes of things gone wrong. There were famous sayings such as *γυναικὸς φρένας* (= mind of a woman), used *ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνοήτων* (= for the simple-minded), or *Ἰλιὰς κακῶν* (= Iliad of evils) denoting a succession of misfortunes. These phrases were commonly quoted up to the fourteenth century[34] and alluded to a woman, Helen of Troy, the cause of war and calamities. References to Pandora's Box, from the classical myth, and even more, to the biblical story of Eve and the Serpent,

31. N. Gaul, All the Emperor's Men (and His Nephews): Paideia and Networking Strategies at the Court of Andronikos II Palaiologos, 1290-1320, *DOP* 70 (2016), 245-270.

32. L. Neville, Strong Women and their Husbands, in: *The Byzantine World* (as in footnote 27), 72-82, esp. 79. B. Hill, Imperial Women and the Ideology of Womanhood in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries, in: *Women, Men and Eunuchs* (as in footnote 8), 76-99.

33. E. L. von Leutsch and F. G. Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, Goetingen 1851, repr. Hildersheim 1965, vol. II, collection by Michael Apostolis, Centuria V, 75, 76, 353.

34. *Ibidem*, collection by George of Cyprus, vol. II, Centuria III, 73, 117. For the image of Helen of Troy as applied in cases of foreigners in Byzantium, see N. Koutrakou, Beauty and the Beast. Some Observations on the Perception of Ladies from the West in Byzantine Writings from the Crusader Era, in: *The Crusades, Justification and Opposition*, ed. by St. Kordosis and G. Tsiaples [Series Abacus 2], Cordoba 2015, 33-57, esp. 37-44.

confirmed that perception. The ninth-century legendary story of emperor Theophilos, poetess Kassia, and their alleged dialogue during the Bride show for the emperor is well-known. Theophilos spoke of woman as the source of all Evil, referring to Eve, while Kassia retorted that she was also the source of all Good, alluding to Mary the Mother of God, bearing testimony to the above-stated perception[35].

In this context, the usual tactic adopted in Byzantine politics and power struggles, from a female standpoint, can be termed as "leading from behind" that is, exercising power if not exactly indirectly, at least less visibly: from behind the scenes and/or through a male figure who was the actual holder of office. In the eleventh century, the last empresses of the Macedonian dynasty held, as per dynastic legitimacy, a more pronounced, more visible power and involvement in politics. The historian John Skylitzes mentioned a kind of assertiveness in empress Zoe (usually dismissed by modern historians), when deciding on the person to elevate to the imperial throne; her attitude stemmed from the fact that she was perceived as the rightful, legal heir by birth (*ἀρχέγονον κληρονόμον*) of the Empire and she was conscious of the power this perception conferred her[36]. The fact that the Constantinopolitan mob, including, to Psellos' amazement, the women of the city[37], rebelled when Michael V exiled Zoe in a monastery and tried to substitute his dynasty for that of the empress, is indicative of the power the dynastic principle conferred to ladies of the imperial family.

---

35. Theophanes Continuatus, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. I. BEKKER, *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus* [CSHB], Bonn 1838), 625; George Monachus Continuatus (ed. I. Bekker, *Georgii Monachi Vitae Imperatorum recentiorum: Theophanes Continuatus Chronographia* [CSHB], Bonn 1838, III), 790. A. M. SILVAS, Kassia the Nun c. 810-c. 865: An Appreciation, in: *Byzantine Women* (as in footnote 8), 17-39, esp. 20-21.

36. John Skylitzes, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν* (ed. I. THURN, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* [CFHB 5], Berlin–New York 1973 = Skylitzes, *History*), 418.27-28. Psellos (*Chronography*, VI, 18.3-4: vol. I, 114: *τὴν ἰσχὺν ἑαυτῇ ἐμνηστεύετο*) also hinted at Zoe's involvement in the choice of her third husband Constantine IX, with the purpose to be his associate in power. On the role of women in transmitting dynastic legitimacy, as channels of renewal for the imperial power, see GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 157. On empress Zoe, see É. LIMOUSIN, Zoè: derrière l'image et les marriages. Une politique?, in: *Impératrices, princesses, aristocrates et saintes souveraines. De l'Orient chrétien et musulman au Moyen Âge et au début des temps modernes*, ed. by É. MALAMUT and A. NICOLAÏDÈS, Aix-en-Provence 2014, 71-84.

37. Psellos, *Chronography*, V, 26.2-6: vol. I, 94.

Constitutionally speaking, though, the political power of imperial women was exercised through male emperors who ascended to the throne after being chosen by women or by their entourage except for two instances: Zoe's and Theodora's quarterly co-rulership in 1042[38], and Theodora's last year 1055-1056[39]. Skylitzes often mentions the *πατρῴους εὐνούχους* (that is, the eunuchs who had been part of the court of the empress' father Constantine VIII) and their role as administrators during Zoe's reign as well as their opposition both to her husband Michael IV[40] and to her adoptive son Michael V[41]. In Theodora's case, her power was visibly exercised in conjunction with her entourage, initially by court eunuchs[42], and later by her ministers and officials[43], although she was personally involved in moments of crisis. Such moments included the city rebellion of 1042 that brought about the fall of emperor Michael V[44],

38. *Ibidem*, VI, 21: vol. I, 115; CONNOR, *Women of Byzantium* (as in footnote 8), 225-226.

39. GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 160-167 and, in particular K. P. TODT, Die Frau als Selsbstherrscher: Kaiserin Theodora die letzte Angehörige der Makedonischen Dynastie, *JÖB* 50 (2000), 139-171.

40. Skylitzes, *History*, 392.14-16: *ᾠήθη μὲν ἀντὶ ἀνδρὸς καὶ βασιλέως δοῦλον καὶ διάκονον ἕξειν, καὶ ἤδη τοὺς πατρῴους εὐνούχους εἰσαγαγοῦσα εἰς τὰ ἀνάκτορα γενναιότερον ἥπτετο τῶν πραγμάτων.*

41. *Ibidem*, 416.60-61: *συνεργοὺς ἔχουσα τοὺς τοῦ πατρὸς εὐνούχους*. See TODT, Die Frau als Selsbstherrscher (as in footnote 39), 162-165.

42. On the role of eunuchs in Byzantine court, political and military life, see among others, K. RINGROSE, *The Perfect Servant. Eunuchs and the Social Construction of Gender in Byzantium*, Chicago 2003; S. TOUGHER, *The Eunuch in Byzantine History and Society*, Abingdon–New York 2008; IDEM, Bearding Byzantium: Masculinity, Eunuchs and the Byzantine Life Course, in: *Questions of Gender in Byzantine Society*, ed. by B. NEIL and L. GARLAND, Farnham–Burlington 2013, 153-166, esp. 163-164; CH. MESSIS, *Les eunuques à Byzance entre réalité et imaginaire* [Dossiers byzantins 14], Paris 2014. IDEM, Public hautement affiché et public réellement visé dans certaines créations littéraires byzantines: le cas de l'apologie de l'eunuchisme de Théophylacte d'Achrida, in: *La face cachée de la littérature byzantine*, ed. by P. ODORICO [Dossiers byzantins 11], Paris 2012, 41-85. Also, with a particular emphasis on a eunuch's chastity, possibly echoing concepts handed down from late antiquity: STR. PAPAIOANNOU, Sicily, Constantinople, Miletos. The Life of a Eunuch and the History of Byzantine Humanism, in: *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. by TH. ANTONOPOULOU, S. KOTZABASSI and M. LOUKAKI [Byzantinisches Archiv 29], Berlin–Boston 2015, 261-284, esp. 283.

43. GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 165-166.

44. LAURITZEN, *The Depiction of Character in Psellos' Chronographia* (as in footnote 18), 76-77.

and the crisis of 1055 when the death of her-brother-in law Constantine IX Monomachos was imminent and she, advised by her entourage, imposed her own rule as reigning empress, despite patriarchal disagreement[45]. Judging by Psellos' descriptions, women behind the scenes, such as the favourite mistress of Constantine IX Monomachos Maria Skleraina, or the hostage princess of Alania after the death of empress Zoe, were excellent examples of women of power and influence. They acted as a kind of female "éminences grises".

In such cases and barring the principle of dynastic legitimacy, evident in case of empresses, the Byzantine perception of women in leadership or quasi-leadership positions was linked to their empowerment by beauty or manipulative character, albeit in an ambivalent fashion. Beautiful women wielding power were both appreciated and distrusted. Psellos recounted the well-known story about the beauty of Maria Skleraina, which recalled Helen of Troy; she was acclaimed as such by the Homeric words *οὐ νέμεσις*[46], affirming that there was "no blame"[47] warring for such a beautiful woman. This story is indicative of the Byzantine perception as to the traditional means used by women to acquire power: beauty and manipulation.

Psellos' portrayal of Skleraina is indeed remarkably complex. On the one hand, she was a woman seeking knowledge, since she had the abbreviated Homeric reference pronounced at her passage by a courtier explained to her. On the other, she was also an intelligent woman, appreciative of ancient literature. Moreover, she was aware of her beauty, and of the admiration and acceptance it awarded her. Lastly, she had built up her power base and a network of supporters by rewarding the flatterers handsomely. It was also a subtle hint as to Skleraina's imperial ambitions (which existed even before her

45. Psellos, *Chronography*, V, 37-44: vol. I, 99-103. On the role of Patriarchs, especially of patriarch Alexios in the politics of the Macedonian empresses, see J.-Cl. Cheynet, Patriarches et empereurs: de l'opposition à la révolte ouverte, in: *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn?: Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht im byzantinischen Mittelalter. Akten der internationalen Tagung vom 3. bis 5. November 2010*, ed. by M. Grünbart, L. Rickelt and M. M. Vučetić [Byzantinistische Studien und Texte 4], Münster 2013, 1-18, esp. 3-4. See also Psellos, *Chronography*, VI, 202: vol. I, 196 and *ibidem*, VI, 204(a1)-206 (a3): vol. I, 197.

46. *Ibidem*, VI, 61.5-10: vol. I, 131. Concerning Psellos' aesthetics, see Ch. Barber, On Perception and Perceptibles, in: *Michael Psellos on Literature and Art. A Byzantine Perspective on Aesthetics*, ed. by Ch. Barber and Str. Papaioannou, Notre Dame, Indiana 2017, 262-269.

47. *Iliad*, Γ, 156-157.

lover Monomachos acceded to the throne) because she was compared to the mythical Helen, a queen both in status and in beauty. The author's words on Maria Skleraina allow for diverse interpretations: thus, Skleraina could be seen, in the words of another scholar, as a "fake empress", as a parody of the real function[48] and her "court" as imitating the one of the empress. However, even in this case, the author acknowledged her position of power.

Similarly, Psellos referred to another mistress of Constantine IX, the hostage Alan princess (literally a "fake empress" in this case, since the emperor presented her as his wife to the Iberian envoys) as a "Proteus", because of her character and appearance, which he perceived as changing[49]. The Byzantine writer stressed that the princess was abusing her power and influence with the emperor to serve her own family and country's interests in a very pragmatic way: she channelled parts of the treasury as gifts to her own princely family. The emperor, besotted apparently by her beauty, could not deny her anything. Psellos' novelistic style, giving to the story an ironic turn castigating the emperor[50], does not detract from the fact that the foreign princess held real power in the Byzantine court. She exercised it indirectly and, as in the case of Skleraina, it was primarily based on seduction. Psellos also underlined that the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos would have married her if he could. However, both the fact that it would have been his fourth marriage, forbidden by canon law, and the fact that his sister-in-law, the ageing empress Theodora, legal heir to the Empire, was still alive, made such an action impossible[51]. Psellos' portrayal of the Alan princess herself had more to do with her involving herself in the Empire's finances and foreign relations than with moral criticism. Her position of power through the emperor, although not willingly accepted by the historian, was openly acknowledged.

---

48. I. POLEMIS, Michael Psellos, the Novelist. Some Notes on the Story of Empress Zoe, in: *Myriobiblos* (as in footnote 42), 285-293, esp. 292.

49. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI,152.9-10: vol. I, 176: *καὶ ἦν ἡ γυνὴ Πρωτεὺς ἀτεχνῶς ἐξαλλάττων καὶ ποικιλλόμενος*. See L. GARLAND, "The Eye of the Beholder": Byzantine Imperial Women and their Public Image from Zoe Porphyrogenita to Euphrosyne Kamaterissa Doukaina (1028-1203), *Byz* 64 (1994), 261-313, esp. 303, 312. On "Alan" hostage princesses in Byzantium, see L. GARLAND and ST. RAPP, Mary "of Alania": Woman and Empress Between Two Worlds, in: *Byzantine Women* (as in footnote 8), 91-123, here at 98.

50. POLEMIS, Michael Psellos (as in footnote 48), 290. See also CH. BARBER and D. JENKINS, On Beauty and on Intelligible Beauty, in: *Michael Psellos on Literatur and Art* (as in footnote 46), 270-278.

51. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI,153.1-5: vol. I, 176.

Needless to say, the power wielded by women informally linked to the imperial family and based principally on their seduction never really went out of fashion. The thirteenth-century story of emperor John III Vatatzes' attachment to one of his second wife's ladies in waiting belongs to the same, somewhat traditional, model of female empowerment. As is well-known, Vatatzes' second marriage in the 1240s, to the daughter of emperor Frederic II (1194-1250), the young Constance of Hohenstaufen[52] (renamed Anna in Byzantium), was politically motivated. From the Byzantine viewpoint, the marriage alliance could ensure the Western emperor's military support[53] against the Latin Empire of Constantinople supported by the Pope of Rome, the enemy of Frederic II[54]. The age difference (Vatatzes 52, Anna 11 or 12) made it almost inevitable that the emperor turned towards a lady of his wife's court to whom the Greek texts refer simply by her title "Marchesina". He made her his favourite mistress and allowed her the same imperial privileges as his wife. She became almost a co-ruler of the Empire of Nicaea during the last years of John Vatatzes. She challenged the power of the Byzantine Church and administration, in particular in the person of Nikephoros Blemmydes, counsellor and friend of the emperor. When she interrupted him while he was officiating in his monastery of St Gregory Thaumatourgos near Ephesus, Blemmydes wrote a kind of libel against

52. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἱστορία* (ed. L. SCHOPEN, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia* [CSHB], vols. I-III, Bonn 1829-1855 = Gregoras, *Roman History*), vol. I, 45.5-9. The marriage is usually dated to 1244. According to A. KIESEWETTER, Die Heirat zwischen Konstanze-Anna Hohenstaufen und Kaiser Johannes III. Batatzes von Nikaia (Ende 1240 oder Anfang 1241) und der Angriff Johannes Batatzes auf Konstantinopel im Mai oder Juni 1241, *RHM* 41 (1999), 239-250, it took place at the end of 1240 or early 1241. See also E. MITSIOU, Η αυτοκράτειρα της Νίκαιας Ειρήνη Δούκαινα Κομνηνή ή ἀρρενωπότερον τὸ ἦθος ἔχουσα, in: *Φιλοτιμία. Τιμητικός Τόμος για την ομότιμη καθηγήτρια Αλκμήνη Σταυρίδου-Ζαφράκα*, ed. by TH. KORRES et AL., Thessaloniki 2011, 447-464, here at 453.

53. J. S. LANGDON, *John III Ducas Vatatzes' Byzantine Imperium in Anatolian Exile 1222-54: The Legacy of his Diplomatic, Military and Internal Program for the Restitutio Orbis*, PhD., Ann Arbor Univ. of California 1978, Los Angeles 1979, 251 proposed the alternative date of 1242 for this marriage. See also E. ANAGNOSTOU, Οι ελληνικές επιστολές του Φρειδερίκου Β΄ Hohenstaufen, *Βυζαντινός Δόμος* 19-21 (2011-2013) = *Τιμητικός τόμος αφιερωμένος στην ομότιμη καθηγήτρια Βασιλική Νεράντζη-Βαρμάζη*, 145-179, esp. 154-156.

54. On the hostilities between the Papacy and Frederic II, see, among others, B. VETERE, Propaganda antisveva tra Enrico VI e Federico II, in: *La propaganda politica nel basso medioevo, Atti del XXXVIII Convegno storico internazionale*, Todì 14-17.10.2001, Spoleto 2002, 85-114, esp. 96-108.

her in the form of a circular letter. He called the imperial mistress a maenad and adulteress who had crossed the laws of Church and men; yet, the real reason of the confrontation probably was to be found in her political power: she appeared *ἐξόχως ἐρωμένη τῷ βασιλεῖ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πάντων ὑπερέχουσα καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς αὐγούστης πρωτεύουσα*. Despite the insults to Marchesina, Blemmydes' letter constituted an open acknowledgement of her power[55] and probably served to denounce her and to muster his allies among the Church prelates in an effort to curb her involvement in State affairs and the power she enjoyed.

In these and further cases, such as in that of Eudokia Makrembolitissa's role in the accession to the throne of her second husband Romanos IV in 1067, empresses and women informally linked to emperors held real political power. They could manipulate the political scene and impose the course of action in times of crisis. Despite his open support of the Doukas dynasty and in particular of his student, emperor Michael VII, son of Eudokia and Constantine X Doukas, Psellos is quite eloquent on Eudokia's imperial function[56] and full imperial executive power, once widowed[57]. She actively supported Romanos IV, pardoned his usurpation attempt and chose him as her second husband and guarantor of her power and the throne for her sons[58]. Eudokia probably could

---

55. Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Ἐπιστολὴ καθολικωτέρα καὶ πρὸς πολλούς ...* (ed. J. A. Munitiz, *Nicephori Blemmydae Autobiographia sive Curriculum Vitae necnon Epistula Universalior. Nicephori Blemmydae Opera* [CCSG 13], Turnhout 1984, 85-94, here at 91.14: *ἄθρους ἀκάθεκτος ἡ μαινάς*; 92. 22-26: *ἀπείργομεν εὐθὺς τὴν μοιχαλίδα, ... ἀποτροπαζόμεθα τὴν ἀσχήμονα, τήν ... τοῖς νόμοις τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀνυβρίζουσαν, καὶ τὴν ὕβριν δημοσιεύουσαν*. On the insults to the favourite mistress within the vocabulary of the period and the relevant probability of the incident being known among the intellectuals of the time, see J. A. Munitiz, A "Wicked Woman" in the 13th Century, *JÖB* 32/2 (1982), 529-537, esp. 531-532. See also A. Sklaveniti, Women in Nikephoros Gregoras' Works: Love Stories, Politics, Literacy and Social Conventions, in the present volume, 140-145.

56. See the relevant remarks by J. C. Anderson, Eudokia Makrembolitissa's Orthodox Miscellany: Cod. Paris. gr. 922, *ΔΧΑΕ* 29 (2008), 17-22, esp. 21-21 on the contents of manuscript *Par. gr. 922* made especially for Eudokia, as a useful reading for her as empress; also I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, Eudokia Makrembolitissa and the Romanos Ivory, *DOP* 31 (1977), 305-325.

57. Psellos, *Chronography*, VII, 122(b1).2-5: vol. I, 263: *οὐκ ἐφ' ἑτέροις τὴν βασιλείαν πεποίηται, ... ἀλλ' αὐτὴ περιζωσαμένη τὴν δυναστείαν τῆς ὅλης ἡγεμονίας γίνεται*. Garland, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 168-179.

58. Psellos, *Chronography*, VII, 131(b10).10-12: vol. I, 267: *ᾠήθη γὰρ ὡς εἰ βασιλέα ποιήσειεν ὃν δέον ἀνελεῖν σέσωκεν, ἑαυτῇ τὸ πᾶν τοῦ κράτους περιποιήσαιτο.*

summon her support, possibly through a network of allies already in place by her late uncle, the powerful patriarch Michael Keroullarios (the king-maker for emperor Isaac I Komnenos in 1057[59]), and his nephews, Constantine and Nikephoros. Her relatives were so powerful that her first husband made her swear at his deathbed not to employ them as "μεσάζοντες", that is administrators of the realm[60].

Eudokia's sole rulership was envisaged as one of the options after the defeat and captivity of Romanos IV at the hands of the Seljuks in 1071. Her involvement in the power struggle against fractions opposing the Doukas family only ended when her son assumed sole imperial rule. These two facts hint at her being a political actor still to be reckoned with[61].

In all these cases, the most obvious source of female empowerment was either family/dynastic legitimacy and/or beauty and manipulation. Furthermore, female power during the eleventh century became openly visible and, especially when it was exercised through a related male, it was accepted as being within the "normal" parameters of power for a woman.

IIb. Women in power in an advisory role: female intuition and wisdom/ distrust attenuated.

The perception of women wielding power less visibly, if not indirectly through their wise counsel, applied principally to female members of the imperial family. Psellos in his *Chronographia* and other writers following him gave several examples of such powerful and wise women. Since wisdom was an imperial virtue, most appreciated in a ruler[62], presenting women as wise was an indirect

---

59. J.-Cl. Cheynet, Le patriarche "tyrannos": le cas de Cérulaire, in: *Ordnung und Aufruhr im Mittelalter: historische und juristische Studien zur Rebellion*, ed. by M.-Th. Fögen [Studien zur europäischen Rechtsgeschichte 69], Frankfurt am Main 1995, 1-16. S. Zoe, Ἱερατικὸς τύραννος-πατριαρχικὴ μεγάλη ψυχή. Μιχαὴλ Ψελλὸς καὶ Μιχαὴλ Κηρουλάριος: οἱ διακυμάνσεις τῶν σχέσεων τῶν δύο προσωπικοτήτων, *Ἑῶα καὶ Ἑσπέρια* 6 (2004-2006), 235-258.

60. N. Oikonomidès, Le serment de l'impératrice Eudocie (1067): un épisode de l'histoire dynastique de Byzance, *RÉB* 21 (1963), 101-128, esp. 107 (= Idem, *Documents et études sur les institutions de Byzance (VII[e]-XV[e] s.)* [Variorum Reprints], London 1976, III).

61. Psellos, *Chronography*, VII, 145(b24)-150 (b29): vol. I, 272-275. On Eudokia's personal power as regent, see Aik. Christophilopoulou, Ἡ ἀντιβασιλεία εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον, *Σύμμεικτα* 2 (1970), 1-144, 65-75, and esp. 66-67 as well as 129.

62. Following the tradition of *Περὶ Βασιλείας* by Synesios of Cyrene (ed. N. Terzaghi, *Synesii Cyrenensis Hymni et Opuscula*, Rome 1944, VII and VIII, 15.13-18.7), the so-called

acknowledgement that they were worthy of the imperial honour; it linked them to the right to rule as honourable members of the ruling dynasty.

On a more political level, Psellos portrayed several imperial ladies as having a kind of sixth sense, a sort of female instinct, an intuition in politics (or should we say a good information network?) which enabled them to give sound advice to the ruling men of the family. It might be an indirect form of criticising the ruler as being less wise than his sage women relatives on the author's part, but it does not detract from the open acceptance of women as bearers of imperial virtues. For instance, Psellos related a story in which empress Theodora Porphyrogenneta and Constantine IX Monomachos' sister Euprepia, whom Psellos had depicted as most wise among women (*συνετωτάτη τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς γυναικῶν*), appear better informed and wiser than the emperor. The women realised the danger posed by a flatterer attached to the emperor, both for the imperial image and for the emperor's personal safety in case of conspiracy, since such an untrustworthy person had easy access to him. In 1051, they warned Constantine IX of a conspiracy involving a favourite courtier of his[63], a member of the imperial guard named Romanos Boilas, and of his senatorial associates. The emperor listened to the imperial women and followed their advice to prevent serious trouble; however, he finally decided only for a token punishment (ten days' banishment from the court) for Romanos Boilas[64].

Mirrors of Princes as well as the *basilikoi logoi*, i.e. texts advising or praising the emperor, refer to temperance and wisdom (*σωφροσύνη, φρόνησις, σύνεσις*) as well as to wise governance (*κηδεμονία ἔμφρονος*) as a fundamental feature inherent in the imitation of God which ought to be practiced by emperors. It was an imperial virtue par excellence, which from the *βασιλικὸς λόγος* as established by Menander Rhetor (ed. D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor*, Oxford 1981, 76-94) onwards, was always to be included in the imperial paradigm. See H. Hunger, *Prooimion. Elemente der byzantinischen Kaiseridee in den Arengen der Urkunden* [WBS 1], Vienna 1964, 85. K. Παΐδας, *Η Θεματική των Βυζαντινών «Κατόπτρων Ηγεμόνος» της Πρώιμης και Μέσης Περιόδου (398-1085). Συμβολή στην πολιτική θεωρία των Βυζαντινών*, Athens 2005, 186-187; P. Agapitos, Η εικόνα τοῦ αὐτοκράτορα Βασιλείου Α' στὴ φιλομακεδονικὴ γραμματεία 867-959, *Ἑλληνικὰ* 40 (1981), 285-323. On the imperial image during the Komnenian period in particular, see Magdalino, *Manuel I* (as in footnote 22), 414-490, esp. 415-416. For an analysis of the modern presentation of the imperial paradigm in this light, see A. Carile, Political Theology in Byzantium as Seen by 20th Century Historians, *Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage* 7 (2007), 73-109 = Idem, *Teologia Politica* (as in footnote 3), 265-272, with relevant bibliography, 393-443.

63. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI,145-150: vol. I, 172-175.

64. On the Boilas conspiracy, see J.-Cl. Cheynet, *Pouvoir et contestations à Byzance (963-1210)* [Byzantina Sorbonensia 9], Paris 1990, no 68, 62-63. K. Μpourdara, *Καθοσίωσις*

The decision led Psellos to castigate the emperor for *ἁπλότητα*, naiveté if not stupidity. While the imperial women are compared to the Homeric goddesses Athena and Hera warning Achilles[65], the portrayal of the emperor's character in this instance leaves much to be desired. Monomachos' image comes out as rather ambivalent: flattering by an indirect comparison to Achilles receiving advice from the goddesses, the depiction could also be construed as a slur; by scorning the wise women's advice, the emperor appeared less than wise himself and thus lacking an essential imperial virtue. This case demonstrates the impact the perception of an imperial woman could have on the image of the reigning emperor and vice versa.

Similarly, personal relations within the imperial family also affected the perception of women in power. According to contemporary historians, Constantine IX Monomachos was rather distrustful and afraid of his sister Euprepia; he repeatedly scorned her advice and became angry when she offered it unasked. As Psellos states, whenever that happened, Euprepia withdrew, angry and still murmuring against him[66]. Psellos' portrayal of Euprepia emphasises her "difficult" (*δυσπαράγωγον*) character and her arrogance. He argues that when Euprepia accepted into her home the general Leo Tornikes, a relative of the imperial family whom the emperor disliked, she indicated her will to oppose her brother rather than her real affection for Tornikes[67].

Zonaras, when describing the same events a century later, although generally following the version of Psellos, is much more explicit: he presents Euprepia almost as an opponent to her brother, being in good terms with Leo Tornikes, whom the emperor considered a threat as a would-be usurper[68].

και Τυραννίς κατά τους Μέσους Βυζαντινούς Χρόνους. Μακεδονική Δυναστεία (867-1056), Athens-Komotini 1981, 125-126, repr. in EADEM, *Καθοσίωσις και τυραννίς ... το πολιτικό αδίκημα στο Βυζάντιο (8ος-13ος αιώνας)*, Athens 2015, 265-266.

65. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI, 150.1-2: vol I, 175: *Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ βασιλὶς Θεοδώρα καὶ ἡ ἀδελφὴ Εὐπρεπία, κατὰ τὰς ποιητικὰς θεάς,* (Athena and Juno) *τοῖς τελουμένοις δεινῶς ἐπεμύξαντο.* On the images of women as conforming to a typical *topos* of wisdom including caution and modesty as female behaviour, see MORRIS, Idéaux et préjugés (as in footnote 8), 133-147, esp. 135-140.

66. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI, 100.14-15 vol. I, 150: *ὁπότε θυμούμενον ἴδοι, ὑπανεχώρει καταφρονοῦσα, τὴν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ὕβριν τοῖς χείλεσι ὑποτονθορύζουσα.*

67. *Ibidem*, VI, 100.15-17: vol. I, 150.

68. Zonaras, *History*, 626.2-8. On the rebellion of Leo Tornikes in 1047, probably the most dangerous that Constantine IX had to face, see CHEYNET, *Pouvoir et contestations* (as

The historian's portrait of Euprepia was probably not only based on Psellos but also on her reputation in the 12th century: as a brave lady, holding to her views, a person who had known felicity in life and was quite rich in her own right[69]. Euprepia's financial independence probably reinforced such character traits as her robust and independent opinion[70], although Psellos presented her as opinionated from the start. Her brother the emperor, in fact, did not like her and did not appreciate her rebukes[71]. Zonaras, likewise, presented the relations between brother and sister as strained: Monomachos was in awe of his sister, while she did not show her brother the subordination of a subject but instead belittled him as a ruler[72]. Not surprisingly, Monomachos finally exiled her. Psellos mentioned her exile rather casually and did not specify whether the rebellion of Tornikes simply gave the emperor a much-needed pretext to get rid of her or whether Euprepia had in fact been involved in the pretender's coup[73].

The case of Euprepia was not the only one in which a female member of the imperial kin was openly involved in the politics of the Empire in a supportive or oppositional way, within her role as "woman of the family" who seeks to protect the family interests. Several female relatives of emperors became

---

in footnote 64), 59-61, no 65; MPOURDARA, *Καθοσίωσις και τυραννίς* (as in footnote 64), 120-123, repr. *op. cit.*, 260-264.

69. Zonaras, *History*, 625.15-16: *γυνὴ γενναία τε καὶ σταθηροτάτη τὸ φρόνημα καὶ εἰς τύχης ἐλάσασα περιφάνειαν καὶ εἰς πλούτου δαψίλειαν.*

70. For an overview on women in economic and agricultural life during the middle Byzantine centuries, see A. E. LAIOU, The Role of Women in Byzantine Society, *JÖB* 31/1 (1981) (= *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4.-9. Oktober 1981. Akten, Hauptreferate* I/1), 233-260 (= EADEM, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, I); NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα στη Μέση Βυζαντινή εποχή* (as in footnote 8), 293-298. On the empowerment of women, especially widows, through independent wealth during the Komnenian and Palaiologan periods, see M. NYSTAZOPOULOU-PELEKIDOU, Η συμμετοχή της γυναίκας στην οικονομία κατά τον ύστερο Μεσαίωνα (η περίπτωση της Σερβίδας κλώστριας), *Ἑῶα καὶ Ἑσπέρια* 5 (2001-2003), 147-177, esp. 151-162. D. MAMAGKAKIS, Άννα Ραδηνή: η γυναίκα της επαρχιακής αριστοκρατίας στο Βυζάντιο του 12ου αιώνα μέσα από κτητορικές παραστάσεις, *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 22 (2012), 71-100, esp. 85.

71. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI,100.2-8: vol. I, 149-150.

72. Zonaras, *History*, 625.17-626.2: *ηὐλαβεῖτο δ' αὐτὴν διὰ τὸ περιὸν τῆς φρονήσεως. Ἡ δέ ... ὑπερηφάνως ὅτε προσελήλυθε προσεφέρετο, διελέγχουσά τε καὶ ὀνειδίζουσα.*

73. Psellos, *Chronography*, VI, 116.2-3: vol. I, 159: *ἡ γὰρ Εὐπρεπία ὑπερορίαν καταδεδίκαστο.*

visible in advisory roles, especially in moments of stress and danger. Their intervention was often prompted by family affairs: its objective was frequently to safeguard the family fortunes by helping eminent male members. When the relative in question was the emperor, the family affair became a state affair. For example, Pulcheria, sister of emperor Romanos III, repeatedly warned her brother that his confidant Michael (the future emperor Michael IV) was his wife Zoe's lover and that he would engineer his ruin and death. That Romanos III did not believe the accusation or did not want to accept that empress Zoe had a lover, is beside the point. The fact remains that Romanos' sister Pulcheria and her entourage opposed empress Zoe at least in her love life if not in her designs to elevate Michael to the throne. Whatever the power game between the ladies of the imperial family, it resolved in favour of the empress. It is also quite probable that Zoe had Pulcheria and her allies in the court taken out of the picture. It might have been a prelude to the probable assassination (disguised as an accident in the bathroom) of emperor Romanos III in a palace coup. Psellos implies as much by using a vocabulary of war to describe the open power struggle between the empress and Pulcheria and their respective followers[74]. Pulcheria died sometime later and so did one of her supporters, while another one was exiled; thus opposition to Zoe was removed both physically and figuratively. The portrayal of both women by Psellos points towards strong characters and wielders of power, both in the family circle and in the Empire. Despite possible literary conventions in the text, the results indicate the ladies' power struggle.

Another imperial sister, Maria, sister of emperor Michael IV and the eunuch John Orphanotrophos, the real holder of power during his brother's reign, is another important case in this regard. She was also the mother of the next emperor Michael V Kalaphates, who at the instigation of John was adopted by empress Zoe and thus associated with power as Caesar, in order to succeed his uncle. Maria tried to advise her brothers on economic policy and its social impact. Returning from a pilgrimage to Ephesus, one of the wealthiest regions of the Empire, she pointed out the catastrophic results of her brother's taxation policy on the most vulnerable members of the population and asked for mitigating measures. Her brother dismissed her advice, as coming from a woman and indicative of a woman's thinking, supposedly influenced by her emotions and not her intellect. According to her brother, she knew nothing

74. *Ibidem*, III, 23.13-14: vol. I, 47: *πρὸς τούτους οὖν ἡ μάχη καθίστατο. καὶ ἡ μὲν παράταξις οὐκ ἀφανής.*

about the State's expenditure[75]. However, the fact that John was among the least popular ministers due to his economic policies and he was removed from power after the death of his brother, to die soon afterwards, does justice to Maria's ability to gauge public opinion.

All the above cases, be they empresses, emperors' mistresses or imperial relatives, constitute examples of Byzantine women who wielded political power, and/or, regardless of success, could affect imperial policies. Regarding the empresses of the Macedonian dynasty, Zoe and Theodora, it was primarily a power that stemmed from their constitutional position as heirs of the reigning dynasty[76]. Zoe wielded secondary power through her three successive husbands and adoptive son; as did while Theodora wielded secondary power through her entourage in conjunction with her leading role in choosing her successor.

Thus, it was authority exercised within the traditional societal boundaries for female power. Neither Psellos nor other contemporary historians are overly critical of such exercise of power. They instead underline that women were the legitimate holders of power, ensuring dynastic continuity – a feature that was well within the traditional boundaries of a woman's duty to the family and the Empire. Byzantine historians, though, stress that this power might give reasons for fear, especially when exercised by unorthodox means.

Psellos justified Michael IV's ingratitude towards the empress Zoe, on the grounds of his fear that she might dispose of him in the same way as her previous husband Romanos III[77]. The historiography of the time may have criticised flaws of character such as Zoe's interest in the production of cosmetics or her obsession with religion later in life, or Theodora's avarice and accumulation of treasures[78]. However, the power they wielded was never put

---

75. Zonaras, *History*, 594.17-595.7: *Τῆς γοῦν ἀδελφῆς αὐτοῦ Μαρίας ... δι' εὐχὴν εἰς Ἔφεσον ἀπελθούσης κἀκεῖθεν ἐπανελθούσης καὶ διηγουμένης ὅσα πάσχοιεν οἱ πένητες ... καὶ ἀξιούσης ἀνεθῆναι τοῖς ὑπηκόοις τὸ τοῦ ἄχθους πολύ, ὁ ὀρφανοτρόφος ἐπικαγχάσας «ὡς γυνὴ φρονεῖς» ἀνταπεκρίθη αὐτῇ, «μὴ εἰδυῖα ὅσων ἡ πολιτεία δεῖται ἀναλωμάτων».*

76. Garland, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 136-157; Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (as in footnote 8), 207-237, and esp. 215-237 underlined Zoe's role as the rightful heir in legitimising the transfer of power from one emperor to the next.

77. Psellos, *Chronography*, IV, 6: vol. I, 53.

78. *Ibidem*, VI, 62.1-11: vol. I, 131-132; VI, 158-159: vol. I, 178-179. Psellos' critical comments and description of the two sisters holding court retains enough ambiguity that it induced modern scholars to consider the empresses as outsiders with regard to the imperial office: see D. Smythe, Insiders and Outsiders, in: *A Companion to Byzantium*, ed. by L. James, Oxford–Chichester 2010, 67-80, esp. 74-75.

into question due to dynastic loyalty. Furthermore, in cases of empresses and other women in a position of authority, their power is perceived as connected to their (usually imperial) family. Moreover, their power is exercised within "acceptable" parameters, i.e. primarily through the male members of the family or trusted retainers. Indirectly this understanding paved the way for women openly to assume -or to be promoted to- positions of power.

III. Leading from behind reconsidered: pushing the boundaries outwards

IIIa. The Komnenian evolution and its aftermath.

From the mid-eleventh century onwards, female leadership was more obvious: the basic strategy "leading from behind the scenes", through a (male) relative or entourage remained the same, but the role of imperial and upper-class women, as well as their involvement in state affairs, became more pronounced and noticeable. The perception of this role, especially when it concerned the imperial women, was amplified. Sometimes, it even leaned towards "visible" leadership from the front, if this presented advantages which overweighed the drawbacks.

The economic independence of aristocratic (and non-aristocratic) women[79], their investment in monasticism and the foundation of monasteries[80] helped

79. Laiou, The Role of Women (as in footnote 70), 239-242, 247, 259; Eadem, The Byzantine Economy in the Mediterranean Trade System, *DOP* 34 (1980), 177-222, esp. 205; Nystazopoulou-Pelekidou, Η συμμετοχή της γυναίκας (as in footnote 70), 154-155. Cases such as a noblewoman money changer or of a female pawnbroker are indicative of the economic empowerment of women: see K. P. Matschke, The Late Byzantine Urban Economy (13th-15th centuries), in: *The Economic History of Byzantium from the Seventh through the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by A. Laiou [DOS 39], vol. II, 463-495, esp. 482 n. 74 and 483. On female empowerment in rural economy based on monastic archives, see Z. Getimi, Γυναίκες στην αγροτική κοινωνία του 14ου αιώνα. Η μαρτυρία των αγιορειτικών εγγράφων, *Βυζαντιακά* 33 (2016), 319-332, esp. 329-331.

80. Investing in monasticism appears a family strategy often spearheaded by women of imperial or noble descent; see for instance É. Limousin, La rhétorique au secours du patrimoine: Psellos, les impératrices et les monastères, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis, M. Mullett, M. Grünbart, G. Fingarova and M. Savage [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 2011/2012, 163-175, esp. 172-174. Judging by the existing *Typika*, women also regulated the economic governance of female monastic foundations, as in the case of the Kecharitomene monastery founded by Eirene Doukaina, where the founder's daughters and other members of the imperial family enjoyed their own private dwellings, servants, and special privileges. See L.

them to visualise their social role while providing them with ampler means to steer personal or family strategies[81]. When combined with strong personalities such as the Komnenian ladies, Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina, respectively mother and wife of Alexios I, female political power became explicit and acquired an almost institutional framing.

Anna Dalassene –at least in the narrative of her granddaughter Anna Komnene– appears to have been the power force behind the establishment of the Komnenian dynasty. In this account, Dalassene was a real matriarch, acknowledged as such by her children, an energetic, intelligent person, with rhetorical skills and a strategic mind. She negotiated important marriage alliances with powerful families for her children and grandchildren, including the betrothal of her deceased son Manuel's daughter to a grandson of emperor

---

NEVILLE, Anna Komnene: A Monastic Intellectual?, in the present volume, 89-105. See also L. GARLAND, Till Death Do Us Part?: Family Life in Byzantine Monasteries, in: *Questions of Gender* (as in footnote 42), 29-55, esp. 52-53. Other examples of women founders of imperial monastic houses include Anna Dalassene (of the Pantepoptes monastery where she retired and died according to Zonaras, *History*, 746.10-14) and Eirene–Piroska, the Hungarian wife of John II Komnenos, co-founder with her husband of the Christ Pantocrator: M. MULLETT, Constructing Identities in 12th Century Byzantium, in: *Το Βυζάντιο ώριμο για αλλαγές. Επιλογές, ευαισθησίες και τρόποι έκφρασης από τον ενδέκατο στον δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα*, ed. by CHR. ANGELIDI [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. International Symposium 13], Athens 2004, 129-144, esp. 131-132. The term "Matronage" coined by M. MULLETT (Female Founders–In conclusion. The Gynamics of Foundation, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 80), 417-428, esp. 426) is indicative of this facet of female empowerment. On these foundations, see K. SMYRLIS, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du X^e^-milieu du XIV^e^ siècle)* [Collège de France – CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 21], Paris 2006, 48-50, 70-72.

81. The *Sebastokratorissa* Eirene, sister-in-law of emperor Manuel I Komnenos who probably commissioned the well-known illustrated manuscripts of the Kokkinobaphos Homiliaries was another such example of a noblewoman of independent wealth and excellent taste. If a recent, gender- specific analysis by M. EVANGELATOU (Threads of Power. Clothing Symbolism, Human Salvation and Female Identity in the Illustrated Homilies of Iakobos of Kokkinobaphos, *DOP* 68 (2014), 241-323, esp. 300-322) is to be followed, Eirene was also a woman who could, through her commissions, influence artistic trends and, possibly, have an impact on symbolic/theological considerations concerning the Virgin Marry and her influence as a model for the role of women in Byzantine Society. On the lady's personality and patronage, see, in particular, E. JEFFREYS, The Sevastokratorissa Eirene as Literary Patroness. The Monk Iakovos, *JÖB* 32/3, (1982), 241-256 as well as EADEM, The Sebastokratorissa Eirene as Patron, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 80), 177-194.

Nikephoros Botaneiates, as well as the marriage of Alexios to Eirene Doukaina, despite Anna's dislike of the Doukas family. The latter was a marriage that legitimised Alexios' link to an imperial family and at the same neutralised the Doukas family as a direct threat. During the rebellion of her sons Isaac and Alexios, Anna Dalassene retained her composure despite the danger she and her family faced when they sought refuge in St Nicholas church close to Saint Sophia; she had to negotiate with the emissaries of the reigning emperor Botaneiates a safeguard of the emperor in order to leave the Church[82]. She was most influential during her son's reign, and her involvement in Byzantine politics took both visible and less visible forms. She probably engineered the replacement of Patriarch Kosmas by Eustratios Garidas[83], who belonged to the network of monks and monastic circles supporting her family and who had foretold her son Alexios I's ascension to power.

On the other hand, the Chrysobull of August 1081 of Alexios I granting his mother full executive powers during his absence from the city, is reported verbatim by Anna Komnene, or so she claims, and constitutes probably the most visible institutional empowerment of a woman at the time. That Dalassene's decisions would stand whether explicitly justified or unjustified[84], speaks

82. *Alexias*, II.5.5-7: vol. I, 67.55-68.8. See D. R. REINSCH, Women's Literature in Byzantium? –The Case of Anna Komnene, in: *Anna Komnene and her Times*, ed. by TH. GOUMA PETERSON, New York–London 2000, 83-105, esp. 88-89; also EADEM, Gender and Power. Passages to the Maternal in Anna Komnene's Alexiad, in: *Anna Komnene and her Times*, 107-124, esp. 114-115; on the treatment of the characterisation of powerful imperial women in parallel to that of *Alexiad*'s central hero, see M. MULLETT, Novelisation in Byzantium: Narrative after the Revival of Fiction, in: *Byzantine Narrative: Papers in Honour of Roger Scott*, ed. by J. BURKE, et AL. [Byzantina Australiensia 16], Melbourne 2006, 1-28, esp. 10-14. On Anna Dalassene and her role for her family's rise to power in particular, see GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 180-198, esp. 188; É. MALAMUT, Une femme politique d'exception à la fin du XIe siècle: Anne Dalassène, in: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes* (as in footnote 8), 103-120.

83. *Alexias*, III.2.7: vol. I, 92.67-74. ANGOLD, *Church and Society* (as in footnote 24), 46; GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses*, 189; more specifically on Dalassene's building up the networks of the Komnenian power, see B. HILL, Alexios I Komnenos and the Imperial Women, in: *Alexios I Komnenos. Papers of the Second Belfast Byzantine International Colloquium, 14-16 April 1989*, ed. by M. MULLETT and D. SMYTHE [Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 4/1], Belfast 1996, 37-54, esp. 45.

84. *Alexias*, III.6-7: vol. I, 102.66-89. GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 190. REINSCH, Women's Literature (as in footnote 82), 89.

volumes as to her political power as well as to her visibility. Despite temporal or other limitations depending on the actual absence of the emperor[85], it also constituted a specific institutional basis for female political empowerment, institutionalising her power, even if she was to share the power with her other son, the *Sebastokrator* Isaac[86]. The decision to bestow a woman with a leading position in conjunction with a male individual gave the appearance of staying institutionally within the traditional boundaries; however, the decision to grant Dalassene full executive powers and the right to exercise them in person had expanded those boundaries exponentially.

The most elegant portrayal of Anna Dalassene in her role as a caretaker, leader and promoter of family success is provided by the story of her reaction when her husband refused to take up the succession of his brother Isaac I in 1059. Nikephoros Bryennios describes her urging her husband to follow in his brother's steps by a series of arguments which sound quite close to the ones Anna Dalassene might have used. Bryennios was married to her granddaughter Anna and presumably had access not only to documents but also to oral family accounts from both sides of his family and probably to a family "readers circle", proofreading his history[87]. Dalassene spoke as a noblewoman, well versed in court intrigues, aware of her family's interests and consciously working to promote them, as well as of the danger to life and limb that a failed pretender could face. Bryennios considered her most adept in words and deeds[88]. She was not averse to using manipulative tactics, tears, pleas, and moody silence as a rebuke to her husband who failed to follow her advice.

The author may have constructed this scene on purpose, to justify the refusal of Anna's husband to take the throne. Anna Dalassene follows female behavioural patterns in the tradition of the Roman matrons, while her husband displayed a "manly" attitude in refusing her pleas, as Leonora Neville correctly

---

85. MALAMUT, Une femme politique d'exception (as in footnote 82), 106-108, 118-119.

86. Zonaras, *History*, 731.19-732.1: *τὰ τῆς βασιλείας παρὰ τῇ μητρὶ νενέμηντο καὶ ἀμφοῖν τοῖς ὁμαίμοσιν.*

87. A. CARILE, La *'Hyle historias'* del cesare Niceforo Briennio, *Aevum* 43 (1969), 56-87 and 235-282; M. MULLETT, No Drama, No Poetry, No Fiction, No Readership, No Literature, in: *A Companion to Byzantium* (as in foonote 78), 227-238, esp. 233-234.

88. Bryennios, *History* (ed. P. GAUTIER, *Nicéphore Bryennios. Histoire. Introduction, texte, traduction et notes* [CFHB 9], Brussels 1975), I, 5: 83.6-7: *ἦν γὰρ δεινή τις καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν.*

argued[89]. Therefore, Bryennios could defend emperor Alexios I' father of any accusation of indifference to the fate of the Empire or even of cowardice. This interpretation does not detract from Dalassene's portrayal as a lady wielding power in the family circle and pushing for it to expand and coincide with the entire Byzantine *Imperium*; indirectly, she is also presented as the caretaker of the Empire and acknowledged as such[90]. Judging from her portrayals by historians outside the family circle, such as Zonaras, Anna Dalassene was perceived as a strong-willed –sometimes even as a despotic, tyrannical– lady to the point that the Byzantine population held her responsible for every failed policy[91]. Certainly, early disappointment induced Anna Dalassene to work even harder to build up a network of alliances in the aristocracy and the Church that would support Alexios I on the throne and shaped her as a leader in the family and ultimately in the Empire's politics.

Another case of broadly perceived political empowerment of upper-class women is that of the women of the Bryennios' family during the revolt in 1077. Bryennios' namesake, grandfather or father[92], rebelled against emperor Nikephoros Botaneiates but was defeated by the then general and future emperor Alexios I Komnenos. This time, the empowerment consisted in giving women leading positions in negotiations within a military and political context[93]. By their appearance as not posing a direct military threat, they won the diplomatic game allowing the Bryennios family to retain its leading position and titles despite its defeat.

---

89. NEVILLE, Strong Women (as in footnote 32), 80.

90. Zonaras, *History*, 731.17-18: *αὐτὴ δὲ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων πᾶσαν διοίκησιν ἀνεζώσατο*. On Anna Dalassene, see GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 186-192. MALAMUT, Une femme politique d'exception (as in footnote 82), 103-120; D. MAMAGKAKIS, *Γυναίκα και πολιτική δράση στο Βυζάντιο. Η μαρτυρία της Άννας Κομνηνής. Τέσσερα γυναικεία πορτραίτα μέσα από την Αλεξιάδα*, Nicosia 2008.

91. Zonaras, *History*, 746.1-4: *ἡ μήτηρ δὲ τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος τούτου τῶν τῆς βασιλείας πραγμάτων ἀναδεξαμένη, ὡς εἴρηται, τὴν διοίκησιν, μέχρι πολλοῦ ταύτην μετεχειρίζετο, ὅθεν καὶ τὰ πρὸς κάκωσιν τῶν ὑπηκόων τότε γινόμενα, ἐκείνῃ οἱ πλείονες ἐπεγράφοντο.*

92. S. WITTEK-DE JONGH, Le César Nicéphore Bryennios et ses ascendants, *Byz* 23 (1953), 463-465; A. CARILE, Il problema del' identificazione del Cesare Niceforo Briennio, *Aevum* 38 (1964), 74-83. IDEM, Il 'Cesare' Niceforo Briennio, *Aevum* 42 (1968), 429-454. IDEM, La '*Hyle historias*' (as in footnote 87), 74-83.

93. On women active in Byzantine negotiations, see N. KOUTRAKOU, Summit Diplomacy (as in footnote 25); P. MELICHAR, Imperial Women as Emissaries, Intermediaries, and Conciliators in the Palaiologan Era, *JÖB* 67 (2017), 103-128.

The examples of such female empowerment multiply in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The most obvious case was that of Eirene Doukaina, wife of Alexios I, who, coming from a rival family, probably had to overcome the distrust of the Komnenians before assuming a leadership position in the family and consequently broader political power, even though she had been crowned empress. However, she held enough power in her own right; at first, she was a legitimising link with the previous dynasty but gradually, especially later in life[94], she gained the good will of her husband through her support for him[95]. Anna Komnene tried to depict her mother as a most "properly" reared Byzantine *despoina*, almost as an ideal Byzantine lady; she compared her to Athena goddess of wisdom[96], again making the most of an attribute of the ideal emperor. Besides, Anna Komnene emphasised her mother's role as a caretaker and protector of the family, especially in her description of her accompanying her father in campaigns to protect him from conspiracies[97].

---

94. She was honoured together with her husband, receiving petitioners and awarding gifts and privileges to religious and their institutions, as to the Calabrian monk Bartholomew of Simeri, later abbot for some time of the monastery of St Basil of the Calabrians on Mount Athos. During his visit to Constantinople, Bartholomew was received magnificently by the imperial couple and gifted with precious icons and manuscripts. See F. BURGARELLA, Aspetti storici del Bios di san Bartolomeo da Simeri, in: *ΕΥΚΟΣΜΙΑ, Studi miscellanei per il 75o di Vincenzo Poggi S.J.*, ed. by V. RUGGIERI and L. PIERRALLI, Soveria Mannelli 2003, 119-134, here at 130.

95. Zonaras emphasised Eirene Doukaina's political power, even if based on the emperor's infatuation, especially in the later years of Alexios I's reign, through words expressing power: (Zonaras, *History*, 747.10-11: *μεγάλα τότε ἠδύνατο*; *ibidem*, 754.7: *τῆς δὲ βασιλίσσης μέγα δεδυνημένης*) and autarchy (*ibidem*, 747.14-15: *κατῆρχεν ἡ βασιλίς*; *ibidem*, 758.18-19: *καὶ ἦν ἐπίδοξος τὴν αὐταρχίαν σφετερίσασθαι*). Zonaras (*History*, 747.16-17: *καὶ πᾶσα ἡ ἐξουσία καὶ ἡ τῆς βασιλείας διοίκησις ἀνατεθῆναι αὐτῇ μετὰ παρέλευσιν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μεμελέτητο*) also reported a plan to make her institutionaly the real holder of power at the death of Alexios I, although her son, John II Komnenos was mature and had a family of his own.

96. *Alexias*, III.3.4: vol. I, 94.30-35; on the style of the *Alexiad* as compared to the works of Bryenios, see D. R. REINSCH, Zur literarischen Leistung der Anna Komnene, in: *ΛΕΙΜΩΝ* (as in footnote 6), 113-125; also IDEM, Women's Literature (as in footnote 82), 92; MORRIS, Idéaux et préjugés (as in footnote 8), 135; GARLAND, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 193-198. On wisdom as an imperial attribute, see above footnote 62 and as applied to women, see above footnote 65.

97. *Alexias*, XII.3.4-6: vol. I, 365.95-366.39. REINSCH, Women's Literature (as in footnote 82), 91. Byzantine histories offer examples of Komnenian women and court accompanying the emperor in his travels and campaigns, sharing in particular his winter

The means Eirene might have employed remained undisclosed. Should the story be taken at face value, it might imply that the empress retained her links with opposing aristocratic families and factions, so that she could be informed in advance about potential conspirators, who would try to gain her support. Alternatively, it may imply that Alexios preferred to take his wife with him on campaign in order to ensure that she and the Doukas faction would not conspire against him[98]. Whatever the case, Eirene's political power and authority allowed her to oppose her husband's will regarding his succession, promoting as the next emperor her son-in-law Bryennios. Her son, John II, resolved the conflict by what amounted to a *coup* with the support of the patriarch and foreign troops[99].

Eirene's portrayal in the sources is that of a policymaker for her family, especially after the death of her mother-in-law. This fact implies a kind of female power struggle within Alexios I's imperial family. However, in lamenting her husband's and parents' death Anna Komnene did not hesitate to call her mother *basilis* among three *basileis*, thus emphasising through a literary mode the power held by Eirene Doukaina[100].

Such stories point towards the visible empowerment of women. Examples of imperial women such as Anna Dalassene and Eirene Doukaina also indicate that women were active political players in their own right and by their own will; at the same time, they followed a conscious strategy, which pushed them to the forefront when their visibility offered political, negotiating or other advantages. This female promotion also implies that the ladies in question would possess the appropriate aptitude, and the necessary intelligence, education and training to assume their new role.

From that point onwards, the visibility of female power became more pronounced. Byzantine authors of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries provide several examples of visible female political leadership and open exercise of power. In the tradition of the Chrysobull of 1081, their appointment as political leaders also assumed institutionalised forms. By the thirteenth century, such a

---

quarters, as for instance, according to Zonaras (*History*, 752.10-15) during Alexios I's efforts against the Paulicians in Thrace. See R. MACRIDES, Women in the Late Byzantine Court, in this volume, 187-204.

98. As surmised by CH. DIEHL, *Figures Byzantines* II, Paris 1908, 60.

99. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 21-22; Zonaras, *History*, 762.3-16.

100. *Alexias*, XIV.7.6: vol. I, 452.52-55: *ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἐμαυτῆς συμφορὰς ἀποδυρομένη, ... τρεῖς βασιλεῖς θρηνοῦσα, τὸν πατέρα καὶ αὐτοκράτορα καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν δεσπότιν καὶ μητέρα καὶ βασιλίδα καὶ τὸν ἐμόν, οἴμοι, σύζυγον καίσαρα.*

case did not elicit protests or comments; it even prompted favourable ones. In one of his letters, George Bardanes, metropolitan of Corfu referred to a certain Anna from the ruling family of the so-called Despotate of Epiros as the ruler of the island. Bardanes wrote to Despot John Doukas in the summer of 1238 and thanked him for the appointment of his sister Anna to Corfu; he stressed that with her assuming that role, the island enjoyed much better governance than previously. Anna has been identified with several princely women of the time. What is of interest for this paper, however, is not her relationship to the Despotate of Epiros or other powers in the region but the fact that she assumed full powers of governance on the island and that this was done, as underlined by Bardanes, in a standardised form[101].

Thus, the political empowerment of noblewomen was viewed as successful while acting within the traditional boundaries of female behaviour. However, their very success and especially the institutionalisation of their powers pushed those boundaries forward, providing women with more space for action.

IIIb. Empowerment par excellence: kinship diplomacy.

Diplomatic negotiations constituted a field where female empowerment was used as a tool in the pursuit of family strategies and marriage alliances. In the aftermath of a marriage agreement, the presence of women was almost mandatory since after the conclusion of the negotiations and the betrothal, the bride customarily had to live with her in-laws.

Female involvement in diplomacy was intensified in the politics of the interregnum 1204-1261 when alliances between former warring foes became commonplace and influential women of the Nicaean Empire, and the so-called Despotate of Epiros gradually acquired a more critical role in such affairs. Similar considerations during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries forced them to become actively involved in diplomatic negotiations not only of matrimonial alliances but also those combining family with more general political and military objectives.

---

101. A. Galoni, *Γεώργιος Βαρδάνης. Συμβολή στη Μελέτη του Βίου του έργου και της εποχής του*, [Byzantine Texts and Studies 46], Thessaloniki 2008, 252-255. Anna has been identified among others, with the first-born daughter of Theodoros Doukas of Epiros, wife of Stefan III of Serbia, or with Anna, wife of Maio Orsini count of Zante. However, her position in relation to that of a dux of the island known from other sources [see A. A. Longo, Poesia greca nel Salento medievale, *RSBN* 51 (2014), 245-279, here at 256, n. 52] needs further study.

Such was the case, for instance, of the negotiations for the marriage between Theodoros II Laskaris, son of emperor John III Vatatzes of Nicaea, and Helena, the daughter of the Bulgarian king John Asan II in 1234. The reasons for this marriage alliance were military and political advantages for both sides, in particular against the Latin Empire of Constantinople[102]. However, the women of both sides were not absent, and their role was probably more significant than it appears at first glance. According to George Akropolites[103], Asan, his wife Maria, daughter of the Hungarian king, and the bride Helena, came to Gallipoli, where they met with emperor John Vatatzes, and a peace treaty was signed[104]. Vatatzes received the bride and escorted her together with her mother to Lampsakos, where his wife Eirene was waiting and where the Church betrothal ceremony took place. Patriarch Germanos II[105] officiated at the betrothal and Helena came to live in the court of Nicaea; there, her mother-in-law, Eirene, undertook the supervision of her education as future empress. The latter seems to follow the traditional pattern of the mother-in-law receiving the bride[106] and giving her blessing to the prospective daughter-in-law, while the emperor and John Asan II carried out the treaty's negotiations at their meeting in the Chersonese[107].

---

102. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 29.15-22. On Nicaea's splendour especially as a cultural centre which added to political motivations for an alliance, see A. Stavridou-Zafraka, Nicaea: The New "Ark" of Basileia, *Βυζαντιακά* 33 (2016), 249-263.

103. George Akropolites, *Χρονικὴ Συγγραφὴ* (ed. A. Heisenberg and P. Wirth, *Georgii Acropolitae opera*, vol. I, Leipzig 1903, repr. Stuttgart 1978 = Akropolites, *History*), 48.22-49.5. R. Macrides, *George Akropolites: The History. Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Oxford 2007, 191.

104. Akropolites, *History*, 33: 50.17-19: *Ἀσὰν σὺν τῇ οἰκείᾳ γαμετῇ τῇ ἐξ Οὔγγρων Μαρίᾳ καὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἑλένῃ, καὶ συνέρχεται εἰς Καλλιούπολιν τῷ βασιλεῖ, καὶ τὰ εἰς φιλίαν ἀμφότεροι διαπράττονται.* See Macrides, *Akropolites* (as in footnote 103), 194.

105. Akropolites, *History*, 33: 50.21-25: *Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννης τὴν αὐτοῦ σύζυγον σὺν τῇ θυγατρὶ Ἑλένῃ λαβὼν διαπεραιοῦται εἰς Λάμψακον, ἔνθα ἦν ἡ βασιλὶς Εἰρήνη, καὶ πληροῦσι τὴν τῶν παίδων συνάφειαν, τοῦ πατριάρχου Γερμανοῦ τὰ τῆς ἱερολογίας τελέσαντος.* See also Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 29-30. Macrides, *Akropolites* (as in footnote 103), 194-196.

106. On the reception of the bride by the groom's father and the role of female relatives, see Macrides, Women in Late Byzantine Court, in this volume, 187-204.

107. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 29.22-30.1: *ταύτῃ τοι καὶ τελεσιουργὰ τὰ τῆς πρεσβείας εὐθὺς ἦσαν καὶ ἅμα τὰ τοῦ κήδους. Καὶ συνελθόντες περὶ Χερρόνησον ὅ τε βασιλεὺς καὶ ὁ Ἀσάν.*

However, the marriage protocol of the Church betrothal (which was a binding ceremony according to Byzantine canon law) could hardly be separated from the treaty itself and the military-political considerations that it was to guarantee. Furthermore, there are some hints of greater involvement of the Bulgarian queen and the Nicaean empress in the marriage negotiations. First, the bride's mother, Maria, was present in the marriage and left only after the ceremony. On the other hand, Akropolites and other historians portray Eirene as a wise and able ruler[108], an "admirable" lady (*θαυμαστὴ Εἰρήνη*[109]), a co-ruler[110], and a co-caretaker of the state affairs[111]. Eirene was a woman with a strong personality, universally accepted in a leading role both in internal politics and in diplomacy. She would educate the young bride Helena in similar duties and thus had to assess the young princess' possibilities in her future role as empress. Her presence in finalising the negotiations that led to the betrothal ceremony is, in this case, only a hint. It was, though, openly acknowledged in 1237 when Asan changed political objectives and tried to annul the marriage by separating Helena from her husband under the pretext of a short meeting with his daughter in Adrianople. After an outbreak of plague in Bulgaria, Asan again revised his policy and confirmed the marriage alliance with Nicaea, sending an embassy to both Vatatzes and Eirene[112].

The role of another female negotiator was quite prominent in the rapprochement attempts between the Nicaean and the Epirote imperial remnants for recovering the Byzantine lands. Theodora, the wife of Michael II of Epiros, was actively involved in the betrothal[113] of her son Nikephoros of Epiros with

---

108. Akropolites, *History*, 39: 62.19-21: *σωφρονικὴ τε καὶ ἀρχικὴ καὶ πολὺ τὸ μεγαλεῖον ἐπιδεικνυμένη τὸ βασίλειον*. On Eirene of Nicaea, a lady of strong personality with her own network of supporters in the tradition of the Komnenian imperial women, see Mitsiou, Η αυτοκράτειρα της Νίκαιας Ειρήνη (as in footnote 52), 455-456.

109. George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* (ed. A. Failler, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations Historiques* [CFHB 24/1-5], vols I-V, Paris 1984-2000 = Pachymeres, *History*), IV. 29: vol. II, 413.1

110. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 44.12-14: *ἦσάν γε μὴν ἄμφω τὴν βασιλείαν ἰθύνοντες πάνυ σεμνῶς καὶ κοσμίως καὶ πλείστην ποιούμενοι πρόνοιαν.*

111. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 44.14: *εὐνομίαν ἀνθεῖν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσι*. Eirene continued the strategy of building up support from Church and monastic foundations, as did the Komnenian empresses. Her legacy was the rule of law and prosperity in the Nicaean Empire.

112. Akropolites, *History*, 34: 53.1-2 and 36: 57.6-13; Macrides, *Akropolites* (as in footnote 103), 196-199 and 200-202.

113. Macrides, *Akropolites*, 40.

the daughter of Theodoros II Laskaris of Nicaea in 1248-1250[114], and the conclusion of the marriage negotiations. The discussions were not finalised till 1256, and her views might not have precisely coincided with those of her husband. Interestingly, the negotiations also included military affairs[115].

The above trend continued in later periods. The fourteenth-century empresses Anna of Savoy and Eirene Kantakouzene, wife of John VI Kantakouzenos, also constitute prominent examples of women actively involved in the negotiations between the warring factions in the mid-fourteenth century Byzantine civil war. Eirene Kantakouzene, a wise and sage (*ἀγχίνους*) female leader, according to Gregoras[116], was extremely active in the negotiations that her husband John VI Kantakouzenos' faction deemed necessary during the civil war with her son-in-law-to-be, John V Palaiologos[117].

IV. Reactions to female empowerment. A Results-based assessment

IVa. The cautious appreciation – when the results conveyed an advantage or did not have any direct consequence for Byzantine politics.

Pushing the boundaries of social accepted female behaviour outwards in cases of female empowerment produced varying reactions. Depending on the circumstances it might provoke admiration, even reluctantly, in particular when it resulted in advantages for the side making the assessment. The usual reaction, however, was a grudging acceptance accompanied by a somewhat critical comment.

The approving, if not openly admiring, way in which Anna Komnene spoke in the *Alexiad* of a foreign strong female leader, Gaeta (Sigelgaita), the second wife of Robert Guiscard, is a particularly relevant example. The *Alexiad*

---

114. Akropolites, *History*, 49: 88.15-22; MACRIDES, *Akropolites* (as in footnote 103), 249, 251-257, 308.

115. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 57.11-15: *καὶ Θεοδώρα ἡ τοῦ ἀποστάτου Μιχαὴλ γυνὴ ἐφοίτα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐκτελέσουσά τε τοὺς γάμους τοῦ τε υἱοῦ Νικηφόρου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως θυγατρός, καὶ ἀποδώσουσα ὅσα παρεξιὼν ὁ ἀνὴρ αὐτῆς ἐν λείας τρόπῳ ὑπηγάγετο μέρη τῆς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐπικρατείας.*

116. *Ibidem*, vol. II, 625.10-11: *πολλὴν πλουτοῦσα τὴν σύνεσιν καὶ ἀγχίνοιαν.* Eirene Kantakouzene was, by his own admission Gregoras' patroness, which might have colored his portrayal of her.

117. On the role of Theodora of Epiros, Eirene Kantakouzene and other Late Byzantine imperial women in diplomatic endeavours, see KOUTRAKOU, Summit Diplomacy (as in footnote 25).

presents Gaeta as having good judgment, a pronounced sense of justice and an understanding of the best course of action to safeguard the interests of her people; she repeatedly prevented her husband from wedging war against Byzantium[118]. Anna Komnene referred to Gaeta who joined her husband in Otranto in order to follow his military campaign, as a kind of Amazon ruler, a new Pallas Athena in full armour[119], who by her words and example prevented an inglorious retreat and subsequent defeat of the Norman army at Dyrrachium[120]. Gaeta's martial valour was located outside the remit of normal female Byzantine behaviour; yet Anna, motivated by her interest in the power struggle for the Byzantine throne, underlined Gaeta's role as a leader in a military situation most pertinent to a male's role, as well as her role in the Norman-Byzantine relations. Since the case had resulted to the advantage of the Empire, it was presented in the positive mode of accepting a woman publicly holding a position of power. At the same time, Anna, who reported it, also enjoyed the acknowledgement of female empowerment.

IVb. Crossing the boundaries of female behaviour: returning to traditional criticism where no particular advantage was perceived.

Unsurprisingly, when female power crossed certain boundaries, critical comments abounded.

The most relevant examples come from the pen of Niketas Choniates, who might, thus, be expressing traditional views of a patriarchal society towards women visible in public life or giving vent to some misogynistic sentiments of his own. His use of the adjective "masculine" (*ἀνδρικὴ*) to describe actions or character of women in power hints rather at disapproval than at a grudging

---

118. *Alexias*, I.12.8: vol. I, 41.32-34: *ἐκωλύετο μὲν ὡς ἀδίκων πολέμων ἄρχων καὶ κατὰ Χριστιανῶν εὐτρεπιζόμενος ... καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς γυναικὸς αὐτοῦ Γαΐτης καὶ ἀνεκόπτετο πολλάκις*. On women in conjunction to Guiscard's politics, in particular concerning his first wife, see P. DALENA, Guiscardi coniux Abelarda: Donne e potere nel clan del Guiscardo, in: *Roberto il Guiscardo* (as in footnote 9), 157-180.

119. *Alexias*, I.15.1: vol. I, 48.50-51: *καὶ χρῆμα ἦν ἡ γυνὴ φοβερόν, ἐπειδὰν ἐξοπλίσαιτο.*

120. *Ibidem*, IV.6.5: vol. I, 133.25-30: *ἡ δέ γε Γάιτα, ... ἡ τοῦ Ῥομπέρτου σύνευνος αὐτῷ συστρατευομένη Παλλὰς ἄλλη κἂν μὴ Ἀθήνη, θεασαμένη τοὺς φεύγοντας ... κατ' αὐτῶν μεγίστην ἀφεῖσα φωνὴν μονονοῦ τὸ ὁμηρικὸν ἐκεῖνο ἔπος τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ λέγειν ἐῴκει· «μέχρι πόσου φεύξεσθε; στῆτε, ἄνέρες ἐστέ»*. See REINSCH, Women's Literature (as in footnote 82), 94-95. See A. R. DYCK, Iliad and Alexiad: Anna Comnena's Homeric Reminiscences, *GRBS* 27 (1986), 113-120, here at 117-118.

acceptance[121]. Choniates' "bête noire", however, seems to be Euphrosyne Kamatere, wife of Alexios III Angelos, for whom he reserved several stereotypes of "Kaiserkritik", from tyranny to loose morals. His animosity towards the Kamateros family[122] might have influenced the author's attitude, although, after the fall of Constantinople in 1204, Choniates clearly sought the patronage of a member of that family in order to establish himself in Nicaea[123]. The historian criticises Euphrosyne for sharing imperial power, that is, exactly for the kind of agency, which caused laudatory comments in the case of Eirene of Nicaea, wife of John III Vatatzes.

The difference between the two cases lies in the way Euphrosyne imposed herself; she appeared almost as a usurper of the imperial power. Choniates' choice of words is indicative of his sentiments in the matter. He accused Euphrosyne of crossing the boundaries not for a woman but for an empress, which resulted in a graceless (literally "artless") power-sharing: *Τῆς τοίνυν βασιλίδος τοὺς ὅρους ὑπερβαινούσης ... εἰς δύο ἀτεχνῶς ἀρχὰς ἡ βασιλεία διῄρητο*[124]. Choniates criticised Euphrosyne's involvement in both internal and external affairs by receiving ambassadors, as well as trying to orchestrate the succession[125]. The appointment of Mesopotamites as minister of the realm proved an excellent choice for her interests. He supported her and enabled her to return to power after der confinement in a monastery accused of adultery and conspiracy[126]; this fact hints at a personal power base. What, however, is evident from this

121. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 230.93-98, described the *kaisarissa* Maria, daughter of Manuel I Komnenos and her involvement against her brother Alexios II Komnenos by arguing: *θερμουργίαν ἀσπαζομένη καὶ ἀνδρικὴ τὸ φρόνημα οὖσα*. On Choniates' handling of the *kaisarissa* as aggressive and reckless, see SIMPSON, *Choniates* (as in footnote 28), 167-168; also A. ANGELOU, Rhetoric and History: the Case of Niketas Choniates, in: *History as Literature in Byzantium. Papers from the Fortieth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, April 2007*, ed. by R. MACRIDES [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 15], Farnham 2010, 289-310, esp. 296-300. On the power struggle between the *kaisarissa* and empress Maria of Antioch, widow of Manuel, see Choniates, *History*, 234-235. The same historian (*ibidem*, 519.37-38) also used the word *ἀνδρισαμένην*, implying a masculine character for Euphrosyne Kamatere. See GARLAND, "The Eye of the Beholder" (as in footnote 49), 292.

122. SIMPSON, *Choniates* (as in footnote 28), 26-31.

123. *Ibidem*, 30.

124. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 460.92-94.

125. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 497.1-5; SIMPSON, *Choniates* (as in footnote 28), 192.

126. Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 484-489; SIMPSON, *Choniates*, 33, 208-209.

example is that a woman in a power position at the forefront of the extended boundaries of acceptable female behaviour could prove dangerous. She was open to accusations of tyranny and immorality and was much less accepted than a male leader who behaved in the same way[127].

In the fourteenth century, Gregoras echoes the above comments. His judgmental words about women in power, who might exceed all limits when their soul and desires were flattered by power[128], indicate that still in Late Byzantium female empowerment could be perceived as a danger, exercised without restraint, almost as a kind of *hybris*. Gregoras' comments concerned developments in the State of Trebizond. Eudokia/Eirene, empress of Trebizond, widow of Basil, Megas Komnenos of Trebizond, and daughter of emperor Andronikos III, sent an embassy to Byzantium asking her father for a husband, with the apparent ambition to stay in power through this new alliance[129]. That her designs came to nothing and caused a civil war in Trebizond because according to Gregoras there was a fear that a woman would not be a good ruler[130], is another story; it might have to do with the peripheral place of Trebizond in Late Byzantine historiography which continued the negative Nicaean attitude towards the Pontic state[131]. It also might have to do with the fact that the case of Trebizond involved Constantinople in a distant power struggle, at a time when civil war threatened to erupt. Particularly interesting, however, is that, despite evolution, acceptance of women in power was not universal and, despite their institutionalised power, it was often conditioned by the results, favourable or not, that their empowerment might produce.

---

127. GARLAND, "The Eye of the Beholder" (as in footnote 49), 292; EADEM, *Byzantine Empresses* (as in footnote 8), 210-224.

128. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 549-551, esp. 551.8-9: *Ἐπεὶ δ' ἐξουσίας κολακευούσης τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν τῆς γυναικείας ὀρέξεως πάντα χαλινὰ διαῤῥήγνυται.* See SKLAVENITI, Women in Nikephoros Gregoras' Works (as in footnote 55), 147-148.

129. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 550.1-3: *συνεκπέμπει δὲ καὶ πρέσβεις ἐς βασιλέα τὸν πατέρα αὐτῆς, κομίσοντας τὸν αὐτῇ μὲν νομίμως συζευχθησόμενον, διαδεξόμενον δὲ καὶ τὴν τῆς βασιλείας ἐκείνης ἀρχήν.*

130. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 550.18-20: *τῆς τῶν Τραπεζουντίων ἡγεμονίας ὑπὸ γυναικὶ διοικεῖσθαι καλῶς καὶ βεβαίως οὐ δυναμένης, στασιάζειν τινὲς ἐπεχείρουν καὶ ἀνασείειν τὸν δῆμον.*

131. YA. MOYSEIDOU, Η αυτοκρατορία της Τραπεζούντας. Ένα «παρασιωπημένο» κεφάλαιο της βυζαντινής ιστορίας, in: *Aureus, Τόμος αφιερωμένος στον καθηγητή Ευάγγελο Κ. Χρυσό*, ed. by T. G. KOLIAS and K. G. PITSAKIS, Athens 2014, 591-602, esp. 601. S. P. KARPOV, *Istorija Trapezundskoj Imperii*, Sankt Peterburg 2007; Greek transl. by E. KRIFTSESKAYA and A. EUSTATHIOU, *Ιστορία της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, Athens 2017, 227-229.

In conclusion:

Widely known cases such as those described above progressively led to a change in the Byzantine perception of imperial or upper-class women in public life. From the mid-eleventh century onwards, there was a gradual empowerment of upper-class Byzantine women, who became more visibly involved in the politics of the Empire. As far as we can judge, that role was gained greater acceptance when it produced results that satisfied male authors. Besides, the portrayal of women in positions of power increasingly drew more attention to the power they wielded; beginning with representations of imperial women, there was increasing recognition of female political empowerment in Byzantine texts.

It should be noted, however, that the cases examined do not indicate that this empowerment was equally widespread or that it touched all societal strata, nor all noblewomen. Much depended on the character and personality of the women involved. Nobody should assume that suddenly women dominated Byzantine diplomacy or that Byzantium became a matriarchal state. On the contrary, distrust towards women leaders persevered until the end of the Empire. Nevertheless, several female leaders, at least in the cases examined, consciously assumed, and in some cases even sought out a leading role. Their reason was primarily to protect and promote family interests and, to judge by their behaviour, in their mindset the Empire became a kind of "larger", "extended" family: hence, their more active participation, especially in marriage diplomacy and alliances which involved family ties.

The empowerment of aristocratic Byzantine women developed out of their traditional role within the family. They consolidated a leading position within the family to ensure dynastic continuity or to guarantee the family's fortunes through cementing marriage alliances and networks of supporters. The latter also often involved foundation of monastic institutions, a traditional pursuit for a woman of imperial or noble descent. Thus, their political empowerment stemmed exactly from their interest in family affairs and, (since most of the diplomatic and political relationships of the time depended on family relationships) vice versa: their involvement in state politics produced an added value for intra- and inter-family relationships. In other words, as the Empire became progressively identified with the imperial family, women's traditional political power as warrantors of family alliances and caretakers of its members expanded accordingly and was exercised in the sphere of the Empire.

However, this had more to do with male family relationships, with women developing a network of male rather than female supporters. When two strong

female personalities interconnected, there was usually a power clash, since they competed for the same support in a male-dominated society. The example of empress Zoe and her sister-in-law Pulcheria or the more known one of Anna Dalassene and her daughter-in-law Eirene Doukaina are cases in point.

Female empowerment in the context of Byzantine politics became a conscious strategy for the Byzantine elite. Pushing women into the forefront of political life and use them almost as a weapon in politics, notably when their empowerment conferred a specific benefit, became a strategy exploiting comparative advantages. The above strategy became a distinguishing feature of the Byzantine ruling class, enhanced by the contacts with the West and was, from the twelfth-century onwards, as reported by Byzantine sources, easily perceived by the Byzantines. Thus, out of their role in the family, Byzantine imperial ladies and noblewomen achieved more visibility and preeminence. However, the social acceptance of their role as power wielders, especially when they crossed the boundaries of what was perceived as traditional female behaviour, was often conditioned by the way they exercised power and by the achieved results.

Nevertheless, despite the upheavals faced by the Byzantine Empire during the centuries under discussion, several imperial and upper-class women achieved visibility as political actors, a factor which could not be ignored. They even became an integral part of the strategies for success in the politics of the time.

LEONORA NEVILLE*

Anna Komnene: A Monastic Intellectual?

One of the most famous Byzantine women to live in a monastery was Anna Komnene. Anna became a nun on her deathbed[1], but it is commonly believed that Anna was forced to live in her mother's monastery, Kecharitomene, following her unsuccessful attempt to seize the throne in the name of her husband Nikephoros Bryennios in 1118. Her time there is presented as a sort of internal exile and some scholars even suggest that she only wrote the *Alexiad* in order to while away the time in prison[2]. I would like to offer an alternative vision of Anna's relationship with the monastery of Kecharitomene, one which explores possible benefits and advantages of association with a monastic house for a woman intellectual of the twelfth century.

First it is important to establish what can be known about Anna's apartments in her mother's monastery and whether she resided there for political reasons. Then we can explore what Anna's story tells us about gender, intellectualism, authorship, and piety in the twelfth century.

Empress Eirene Doukaina and Alexios I Komnenos founded neighboring monasteries in the northwestern corner of Constantinople near the beginning

---

* University of Wisconsin Madison.

1. George Tornikes, *Λόγος ἐπὶ τῷ θανάτῳ τῆς πορφυρογεννήτου κυρᾶς Ἄννης τῆς καισαρίσσης* (ed. J. DARROUZÈS, *George et Dèmètrios Tornikès. Lettres et discours. Introduction, texte, analyses, traduction et notes*, Paris 1970), 221-323, here at 313 describes Anna's deathbed tonsure. Anna's taking on of the "dress of perfection" is clearly presented as a prelude to her death.

2. F. CHALANDON (*Les Comnène: études sur l'Empire byzantin aux XIe et XIIe siècles*, vol. 2: *Jean II Comnène, 1118-1143, et Manuel I Comnène, 1143-1180*, Paris 1912, 16) believed that Anna lived in disgrace and "sought in the cult of letters to forget the evils, whose true creator she had been". CH. DIEHL (*Byzantine Empresses*, transl. by H. BELL and TH. DE KERPELY, New York 1963, 190) said that after the supposed failed coup, "Anna Comnena was only thirty-six years old, but her life was over." This rhetorically presents Anna already dead long before she began writing.

of the twelfth century. Alexios founded the men's monastery of Christ Philanthropos and next to it Eirene founded the women's monastery of the Mother of God Full of Grace, "Kecharitomene". Later medieval travelers to Constantinople described Philanthropos and Kecharitomene as on the route from the Pantokrator monastery to Petra and Blachernae[3]. We are lucky to have the text of Eirene's foundation charter in what is believed to be her autograph: *Paris. gr. 384*. The main text of the charter presents the rules that were to regulate the life of the nuns and govern the monastery. A short addendum added at a later date updates the charter and provides more information about the palatial apartments within the circuit of the monastery. The main text seems to have been written between 1108 and 1118, most likely around 1110[4]. The addendum was written after the death of Eirene's daughter Eudokia, and before Eirene's own death, which can be dated to sometime after 1130, perhaps 1133[5].

3. G. P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* [DOS 19], Washington, D.C. 1984, 296-298; plate II #31. On the location of the monastery, see N. Melvani, The Duplication of the Double Monastery of Christ Philanthropos in Constantinople, *RÉB* 74 (2016), 361-384. Vl. Stanković and A. Berger, The Komnenoi and Constantinople before the Building of the Pantokrator Complex, in: *The Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople* [Byzantinisches Archiv 27], ed. by S. Kotzabassi, Berlin 2013, 3-32. Vl. Stanković, Comnenian Monastic Foundations in Constantinople: Questions of Method and Context, *Belgrade Historical Review* 2 (2011), 47-71. On the layout of the monastery, see: E. Mitsiou, The Monastery of Kecharitomene and the Contribution of the Assumptionists to the Study of Female Monasticism in Byzantium, in: *L'apport des Assomptionnistes Français aux Études Byzantines. Une approche critique*, ed. by M.-H. Blanchet and I. Tudorie [Archives de l'Orient chrétien 21], Paris 2017, 327-344.

4. The youngest of Eirene's daughters, Theodora born in 1096, is mentioned as married, indicating a terminus post quem for the main text of around 1108-1110. The text also commemorates Michael Doukas, who died after 1108. Alexios Komnenos is mentioned as living in the text, providing a firm terminus ante quem of 1118. P. Gautier (Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitômènè, *RÉB* 43/1 (1985), 5-165, text: 19-155 = Gautier, Typikon Kécharitômènè, esp. 13-14) also notes that the patriarch Nicholas Grammatikos is not given an epithet customary of the deceased. Since Nicholas died in the first part of 1111, Gautier dates the *Typikon* to around 1110. B. Skoulatos (*Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade: Analyse prosopographique et synthese* [Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie/ Université de Louvain, 6e sér., fasc. 20], Louvain-la-Neuve 1980, 149) prefers 1116.

5. The information on the date of Eirene's death is conflicting, and derives from a poem by Prodromos and two commemorations in the *Typika* for her sons' monasteries. Theodoros Prodromos wrote a poem for Eirene on the death of her son Andronikos in which he lists a number of tragedies that had beset Eirene: the deaths of her husband

At the time that the addendum was written, Anna already had a royal apartment that stood on the wall between Kecharitomene and the adjacent male monastery of Philanthropos[6]. The addendum explains that Eirene had constructed another set of sumptuous, palatial apartments for the use of her daughter Eudokia, who was a nun. They are described as "newly built and very sumptuous buildings". But since Eudokia had died, Eirene decreed that her daughter Anna should inherit these apartments. After Eirene's death, Anna should:

> "... possess and occupy without hindrance, while she lives, not only all the cells in which she resided while I was alive, but also all the

Alexios, of her son-in-law Nikephoros Euphorbenos, of the wife of her son Andronikos, of Andronikos' young son, of her daughter Eudokia, of her son Andronikos; and finally the flight of her son Isaac. Isaac Komnenos, Anna's brother, formed a plot against John while on campaign in Syria and fled to the emir of Melitene in 1130. Isaac remained in exile in various eastern courts until his reconciliation with John in 1136. The unfortunate events listed in the poem began with the death of Alexios in 1118 and continued until around the time of Isaac's defection in 1130. This suggests that Eirene was still alive after 1130. The *Typikon* of John's monastery of Christ Pantokrator which itself is securely dated to 1136, lists Eirene as already dead. The *Typikon* for her son Isaac's monastery of Christ Kosmosoteira, founded in 1151, gives an indiction year for Eirene's death that corresponds to either 1123 or 1138. Chalandon suggested that the indiction year of Isaac's *Typikon* be corrected from "1" to "11" which would yield a date of 1133. Papaioannou favors 1123 as the date of Eirene's death, following Kurtz, but it is unclear whether he took the evidence from Prodromos' poem on the death of Andronikos into account. Gautier provides a review of the evidence: P. GAUTIER, L'obituaire du typikon du Pantokrator, *RÉB* 27/1 (1969), 235-262, esp. 246-247. STR. PAPAIOANNOU, Anna Komnene's Will, in: *Byzantine Religious Culture: Studies in Honor of Alice-Mary Talbot*, ed. by D. SULLIVAN, E. FISHER and STR. PAPAIOANNOU [The Medieval Mediterranean 92], Leiden 2012, 99-121 esp. 105 note 19. ED. KURTZ, Unedierte Texte aus der Zeit des Kaisers Johannes Komnenos, *BZ* 16 (1907), 69-119, esp. 86, 94. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, 14, 139, line 2145. Engl. transl. by R. JORDAN, Kecharitomene: Typikon of Empress Irene Doukaina Komnene for the Convent of the Mother of God Kecharitomene in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 2, no. 27, 649-724 (= JORDAN, Kecharitomene), here at 708. Theodoros Prodromos, *Στίχοι ἡρῷοι εἰς τὴν βασίλισσαν κυρὰν Εἰρήνην τὴν Δούκαιναν ἐπὶ τῷ θανάτῳ τοῦ σεβαστοκράτορος υἱοῦ αὐτῆς* (ed. W. HÖRANDNER, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* [WBS 11], Vienna 1974), 184-188, here at lines 14-29. GAUTIER, L'obituaire, 249-250; IDEM, *Michel Italikos. Lettres et discours* [Archives de l'Orient chrétien 14], Paris 1972, 31-34. P. MAGDALINO, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143-1180*, Cambridge 1993, 193-195.

6. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, lines 2118-2125; JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 707.

> buildings in the convent of *Kecharitomene*, that is all those which were for the use of my Majesty and our children and our servants both men and women, together with the outer courtyard situated immediately next to the inner courtyard of the more sumptuous buildings"[7].

Eirene here describes a situation in which Anna would then own two sets of palatial apartments, at least one of which could be frequented by male and female relatives and servants.

In addition to financial control, and Eudokia's palaces, Anna was to inherit several other structures as well as rights over water usage and future building in the monastery:

> "... Furthermore, she should possess the church of St Demetrius with the two bathhouses and a third of the spring water that is brought into the buildings of the convent, that is, just as I possess them, and she must have complete freedom to build other new buildings, whatever kind she wishes, and to change those that exist, both the imperial and the other ones, in whatever way she chooses, and to alter them to whatever form she wishes, observing this only, namely, not to set a new burden of any sort whatsoever on the dividing wall of both monasteries, that is of *Philanthropos* and that of *Kecharitomene*, nor to have any place overlooking them"[8].

Anna's rights as guardian of the monastery, and possessor of these royal buildings exceeded those of the monastery's superior. Eirene forbade the monastic superior from making further expansions or alterations to the buildings of the monastery itself. The future superior was only authorized to make necessary repairs to the structures that Eirene had built[9]. Anna and the future guardians were explicitly given the right to build on the imperial rooms in any way they pleased, change them as they see fit, and to rebuild them if they should happen to fall or burn down. The only restriction on their building was that they could not make a structure that would allow one in the imperial rooms to observe the private courtyard of the monastery[10].

---

7. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, lines 2090-2118; JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 707.

8. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, lines 2090-2118; JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 707.

9. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, lines 1890-1906. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 702-703.

10. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, lines 2170-2172. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 702-703.

The demarcation lines between the royal apartments and the regular dwellings of the nuns are clear: "the door which leads into this convent from the direction of imperial buildings will be closed on the inside by the superior and on the outside by the guardian of the convent"[11]. Both the superior of the monastery and the Komnenian *despoina* would need to open their own doors for either to pass into the other space. Eudokia's royal buildings were free-standing and apparently not connected to the walls of Kecharitomene[12].

Once Anna died, her apartment on the wall between the two monasteries would need to be destroyed:

> "... after the departure from this life of Lady Anna, *porphyrogenneta*, only the buildings overhanging the dividing wall and looking towards the garden of the monastery of *Philanthropos* must be destroyed, in which today resides the aforesaid lady, *porphyrogenneta*; and this wall must be raised by further two cubits"[13].

Anna's apartment apparently had a view into the men's monastery. Elsewhere Eirene stipulates that Anna was not to expand these buildings so as to create a space that looked into the Kecharitomene courtyard[14]. While it was fine for Anna to have a view into the Philanthropos courtyard, Eirene did not want someone else living in this apartment, which so easily would compromise the seclusion of both monasteries. Eirene decreed that the wall between the monasteries should be raised considerably after Anna's apartment was removed.

Eirene's charter dictated that the nuns would follow a rigorous monastic practice. Anna, Eirene, and their heirs using the royal apartments were not subject to the same discipline. Eirene decreed that male relatives could visit the nuns only once or twice a year, after all the other nuns had returned to their dormitory, and under the supervision of the supervisor[15]. This restriction on

---

11. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2287-2289. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 710.

12. Eirene specifies that those who will inherit these buildings will be able to build and make alterations to them, but "they will not prop any building on the empty walls around the convent or its buildings but the buildings will be completely freestanding just as they have been made by us". GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2170-2172. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 710. For detailed analysis of the monastery's plan see: MITSIOU, The Monastery of Kecharitomene (as in footnote 3), 334-341.

13. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2118-2125. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 707.

14. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2118-2125. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 707.

15. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2270-2280. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 708.

visitors applies only to the convent and not the imperial buildings. The royal apartments, in contrast, could be frequented by Eirene or Anna, along with their male or female servants or children[16]. Anna, or her daughters, would have the right to take their meals with the nuns, when they were using the apartments, but they could only bring two or three of their serving women[17]. Unlike the nuns, those dwelling in the imperial building had no requirement to eat in the monastic refectory.

Eirene instructed Anna to leave the royal apartments, and the guardianship of the monastery, to her daughter Eirene, and then on to her female descendants. If the line of Anna's daughters and granddaughters were to fail, the royal buildings were to be rented with the revenues supporting the monastery[18]. If Anna's daughter had no suitable female relative to whom to bequeath the guardianship of the monastery, she was allowed to give it to a male relative. This further shows how clearly separated the role of guardian was from that of nun[19]. The position of guardian entailed financial control and protection of the monastery, but not monastic vows or participation in monastic life. Eirene explicitly banned the holder of the guardianship over her monastery from entering the monastery except during liturgy[20].

So the monastic residences used by Eirene and Anna did not seem to have been all that monastic. They were situated in the precinct of the monastery, and perhaps formed part of some sort of outer courtyard. But they were architecturally separate and explicitly exempted from monastic discipline. We need to think about what purpose was served by considering these buildings as part of the monastery, and what benefits Eirene and Anna derived from their association with the monastery. Before exploring this question however, we should examine the evidence concerning when and why Anna lived in Kecharitomene.

The common story, known by nearly all Byzantinists, is that Anna was forced to retire to Kecharitomene following the failure of her attempt to wrest power from her brother John in 1118. Yet no medieval source suggests that this was the case. On the contrary, orations and letters of Theodoros Prodromos, letters of Michael Italikos and John Tzetzes, and a funeral oration by Constantine

16. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, line 2099-2106. JORDAN, Kecharitomene 707.
17. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2282-2286. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 710.
18. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2157-2164. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 708.
19. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, line 2129. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 708.
20. GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômênè, lines 2262-2266. JORDAN, Kecharitomene, 710.

Manasses all indicate that Anna and Nikephoros lived out their lives as members of the imperial court[21]. In an effort to maintain the traditional narrative of crime and punishment, while accounting for the evidence of Anna's continued presence at court, Alexios Savvides held that Anna was forced to retire to Kecharitomene as a result of her attempted coup, but only after the death of her husband 20 years later[22]. The mismatch between the medieval evidence and the commonly-believed story indicates that something fishy is going on.

The medieval narrative histories do not indicate that Anna was sent to monastery. The medieval text with the most elaborate story of an attempted coup, the history of Niketas Choniates, says that John forgave his sister and restored her property[23]. In the histories of Zonaras and Glykas, there is no coup attempt. For Zonaras the scandal was that John left his father's bedside to be acclaimed before his father had actually died[24]. In his funeral oration for Anna, George Tornikes describes Anna and Nikephoros as helping Eirene and Alexios with administration prior to Alexios' death, and John may indeed have had reasons to be nervous about his succession[25]. The history Nikephoros wrote can

21. Theodoros Prodromos, *Ἐπιτάφιοι τῇ γυναικὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πανευτυχεστάτου καίσαρος κυροῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Βρυεννίου, κυρᾷ Θεοδώρᾳ* (ed. P. GAUTIER, *Nicéphore Bryennios. Histoire. Introduction, texte, traduction et notes* [CFHB 9], Brussels 1975), 355-367; Theodoros Prodromos, *Ἐπιθαλάμιον τοῖς τοῦ εὐτυχεστάτου καίσαρος υἱοῖς* (ed. GAUTIER, *Nicéphore Bryennios, op. cit.*), 341-355; GAUTIER, *Michel Italikos* (as in footnote 5), 87-88, 151-154; HÖRANDNER, *Theodoros Prodromos* (as in footnote 5), 382-389; John Tzetzes, *Τῇ πορφυρογεννήτῳ κυρᾷ Ἄννῃ τῇ Καισαρίσσῃ* (ed. P. A. M. LEONE, *Joannis Tzetzae Epistulae*, Leipzig 1972), 75-77; ED. KURTZ, Evstafija Fessalonikijskogo i Konstantina Manassi monodii na končinu Nikifora Komnina, *VV* 17 (1910), 283-322; L. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene: The Life and Work of a Medieval Historian*, New York 2016, 113-120.

22. A. SAVVIDES, Anna Komnene, Historian, 1083-1153/4, *International Encyclopaedia for the Middle Ages-Online. A Supplement to LexMA-Online*, Turnhout 2011, http://www.brepolis.net.

23. Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 1975), vol. I, 5-12.

24. John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ Ἱστοριῶν* (ed. TH. BÜTTNER-WOBST, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitomae Historiarum, Libri XIII-XVIII* [CSHB], vol. III, Bonn 1897), 747-765. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 93-96.

25. George Tornikes, *Funeral Oration* (as in footnote 1), 261. PH. MEYER, *Die Haupturkunden für die Geschichte der Athosklöster: Grösstentheils zum ersten Male herausgegeben und mit Einleitungen versehen*, Leipzig 1894, 178-180. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 97.

be read as revealing his own imperial ambitions[26]. But even in the most extreme narrative of the coup attempt, that of Choniates, it is a story about something that didn't happen: people thought about trying to murder John, but didn't; John thought about confiscating Anna's property, but didn't[27].

Anna's role in an attempted coup, and in fact the entire coup narrative, has been greatly exaggerated by modern historians, I believe, because it helps make sense of the hyperbolic emotionalism of Anna's self-portrayal in the *Alexiad*. Given that Anna's husband and parents all died of natural causes in old age, no one believes the extreme mourning she expresses in her history. Taking the vehemence of emotion at face value however, historians have tried to come up with some other reason for her to be so upset, and the coup narrative provides the explanation that she was really incensed that she had not managed to become empress. Yet Anna was a rhetorician: no emotion was expressed in the *Alexiad* because Anna could not help it. Rather emotional performances were deployed in an effort to elicit a particular affective response from her audience. Anna's outbursts of mourning serve many functions: they present her as having a normal range of female emotions, they humble her before her audience by asking for pity, they display her ability to control her emotions, they frame her history within a funerary discourse in which a woman's voice was more appropriate, to name a few. Understanding the rhetorical functions of Anna's use of emotion in her writing explains her self-presentation in the *Alexiad* without resorting to a political back-story. Without the need to explain why Anna seems so distraught in her history, the politics of 1118 suddenly seem much less significant[28].

Positivist political interpretations of Anna's emotional rhetoric drive the perception that she was condemned to monastery. In particular, evidence for her living in monastic isolation is adduced from the following passage:

> "But I, lamenting bitterly my own misfortunes, mourning for all time three emperors, the father and autocrator, and my lady, mother and empress and, ah me!, my husband the Caesar, I stay secluded mostly and devoted to books and God, and not even will it be allowed for the more obscure among men and those of my father's familiars to visit us so that we are not able to learn what they have heard from others.

---

26. L. NEVILLE, *Heroes and Romans in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The "Material for History" of Nikephoros Bryennios*, Cambridge 2012.

27. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 91-112.

28. *Ibidem*, 15-88.

> For in thirty years, I swear in the soul of the blessed autocrator, I have not seen, I have not looked at, I have not spoken with my father's people, as on the one hand many have passed away, while on the other many have been confined by fear. For those in power condemned us to obscurity for these aberrations, but we are hated by the majority"[29].

Taken out of context, it is reasonable to see Anna as referring here to some sort of enforced isolation. Yet this sentence is an interruption in a description of Anna's research methodology in which, in both the previous and the following sentences, she indicates that she gathered information for her history through the questioning of witnesses. This claim to isolation flatly contradicts the rest of the paragraph in which it sits. Another strange thing about this sentence, aside of uncommon obscurity, is that Anna switches from talking about herself in the feminine singular to the masculine plural. Elsewhere Anna does not get confused about her gender, and makes shifts in grammatical gender consistently and purposefully[30]. To understand who Anna is talking about here, and why she is describing herself as isolated in the midst of the description of her research methods, we need to think carefully about what roles this emotional outburst plays in her history.

This passage is part of Anna's description her sources in Book 14 in which she makes some claims that are highly authorizing within the context of the Greek tradition of historiography, but also highly scandalous within the context of norms of behaviour for aristocratic women in Anna's culture. The discussion of sources is spliced with emotional outbursts that construct Anna as an isolated, disempowered object of pity. She claims that she gathered some information from her history through her own personal observation,

---

29. Anna Komnene, Ἀλεξιὰς (ed. D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias* [CFHB 40/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 2001 = *Alexias*), XIV.7.6: vol. I, 452.53-64: *ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ τὰς ἐμαυτῆς συμφορὰς ἀποδυρομένη, κατὰ τόδε καιροῦ τρεῖς βασιλεῖς θρηνοῦσα, τὸν πατέρα καὶ αὐτοκράτορα καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν δεσπότιν καὶ μητέρα καὶ βασιλίδα καὶ τὸν ἐμόν, οἴμοι, σύζυγον καίσαρα, ἐγγωνιάζω τὰ πολλὰ καὶ βιβλίοις καὶ Θεῷ προσανάκειμαι, καὶ οὐδὲ τοῖς ἀφανεστέροις ἐξέσται τῶν ἀνθρώπων παρ' ἡμᾶς φοιτᾶν, μὴ ὅτι γε δι' ὧν μανθάνειν εἴχομεν, ἅπερ παρ' ἄλλων διακηκοότες ἐτύγχανον, καὶ τοῖς τοῦ πατρὸς οἰκειοτάτοις. εἰς τριακοστὸν γὰρ τοῦτο ἔτος, μὰ τὰς τῶν μακαριωτάτων αὐτοκρατόρων ψυχάς, οὐκ ἐθεασάμην, οὐκ εἶδον, οὐχ' ὡμιλήκειν ἀνθρώπῳ πατρῴῳ, τοῦτο μὲν τῶν πολλῶν ἀπερρυηκότων, τοῦτο δὲ τῶν πολλῶν ἀπειργομένων τῷ φόβῳ. καὶ τούτοις γὰρ ἡμᾶς κατεδίκασαν οἱ κρατοῦντες τοῖς ἀτοπήμασι μηδὲ θεατοὺς εἶναι, ἀλλ' ἐστυγημένους τοῖς πλείοσιν.*

30. Neville, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 85.

some from stories told by her father and her uncles, some by interviewing old veterans, and some from narratives written by participants in her father's wars. This research puts her squarely within the best practices of the tradition of Greek historiography, which held that historians who gathered information via personal autopsy and interviewing participants produced the most reliable histories[31]. Yet this laudable historical technique implicated Anna in behaviours that ran contrary to her culture's expectations for good women: leaving the confines of her house, engagement in political discourse, and talking extensively with men to whom she was not related[32].

The deep transgressions of this behaviour explain, in my view, why Anna did not include a discussion of her sources and methodology in the prologue to her history, where it would be expected. Her prologue was already a mixture of aggrandizing statements that establish Anna's credentials and capabilities for writing history, and humbling statements that cast Anna as a miserable and wretched. She balances the inherently boastful claim that she is a competent historian with lamentations that portray her as a piteous old widow, in an apparent effort to gain the goodwill of her audience. To reveal in addition, at that tense moment, that she had traveled on military campaigns and personally interviewed veterans would have presented her as such an immodest woman that no amount of lamentation could humble herself enough to expect an audience to accept her good character.

The good character of the historian was an essential element in the construction of an authoritative history, because it was the only guarantee the audience had that the author did not lie or misrepresent the past[33]. So for her history to be acceptable, Anna needed to present herself as a person of upstanding morals. Since the defining characteristics of a good woman in her culture were silence, modesty, deference to male authority, and seclusion

31. J. MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography*, Cambridge 1997, 63-127.

32. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 16-20; STR. PAPAIOANNOU, *Michael Psellos. Rhetoric and Authorship in Byzantium*, Cambridge 2013, 200-209; L. JAMES, Men, Women, Eunuchs: Gender, Sex and Power, in: *The Social History of Byzantium*, ed. by J. F. HALDON, Malden, Ma-Oxford 2009, 31-50; L. JAMES, The Role of Women, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies*, ed. by E. JEFFREYS, J. F. HALDON, and R. CORMACK, New York 2008, 643-651; C. GALATARIOTOU, Holy Women and Witches: Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender, *BMGS* 9 (1984), 55-94.

33. MARINCOLA, *Authority and Tradition* (as in footnote 31), 128-174.

from the male gaze, Anna had difficulty being both a good woman and a good historian[34].

When she does raise the issue of her sources in Book 14, she faced the same dilemma. As in her prologue, she responds by splicing her authorizing description of her sound historical methodology with emotional outbursts that portray her as a worthy of pity and condescending good will. Immediately after revealing that she accompanied her father and mother on campaign, she launches into a lament for her own misfortunes. She does not describe or identify what these misfortunes were, on the grounds that to tell them would take, "the Siren of Isocrates, the grandiloquence of Pindar, the rushing of Polemon, the Kaliope of Homer, the lyre of Sappho, or some other power beyond these." She continues, dramatically and vaguely, that, "there is nothing terrible, either small or large, or near or far, that did not fall heavily against me. Aye, the wave rose above undoubtedly, and from then until now and until where I write these words, the sea of sorrows has howled at me and still wave overtakes wave"[35]. By bewailing her misfortunes, Anna constructed herself as a poor lonely widow that her audience ought to regard with compassionate condescension. Just when Anna could imagine her audience being shocked by her admission that she had left the social safety of her own house, she endeavors to provoke feelings of pity rather than anger in her audience.

Then as suddenly as she began lamenting, Anna explicitly recovers her emotional control and continues talking about historical methodology: "now then, coming to my senses I will swim again upstream, as it were, and return to the first topic"[36]. Anna then describes her various sources of information, and specifies that she conducted research during the reign of Manuel, "when all

34. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 15-30

35. *Alexias*, XIV.7.4: vol. I, 451.30-39: *τὰ δ' ἔξωθεν καὶ ὅσα μοι συνεπεπτώκει οὔπω τὸν ὄγδοον ὑπερελασάσῃ χρόνον, καὶ ὅσους ἐχθροὺς ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων μοι κακία παρεβλάστησε, τῆς Ἰσοκράτους Σειρῆνος δεῖται, τῆς πινδαρικῆς μεγαλοφωνίας, τοῦ Πολέμωνος ῥοίζου, τῆς ὁμηρικῆς Καλλιόπης, τῆς σαπφικῆς λύρας ἤ τινὸς ἄλλης παρὰ ταύτας δυνάμεως· οὐδὲν γάρ ἐστι τῶν δεινῶν οὐ μικρόν, οὐ μεῖζον, οὐκ ἐγγύθεν, οὐ πορρωτέρω, ὃ μὴ εὐθὺς ἐπέβρισε καθ' ἡμῶν. καὶ δῆτα καὶ ὑπερέσχε σαφῶς τὸ κλυδώνιον, καὶ ἔκτοτε καὶ μέχρι τοῦ νῦν καὶ μέχρις οὗ τὸ σύγγραμμα τουτὶ γράφω, ἡ τῶν συμφορῶν ἐπωρύεταί μοι θάλαττα καὶ ἄλλα ἐπ' ἄλλοις καταλαμβάνει τὰ κύματα.*

36. *Ibidem*, XIV.7.4: vol. I, 451.39-42: *ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἔλαθον εἰς τὰς ἐμαυτῆς συμφορὰς παρασυραμένη· νῦν οὖν ἐπὶ νοῦν ἐλθοῦσα ἐπανανήξομαι καθάπερ ἀνάρρουν ποιησαμένη καὶ πρὸς τὰς πρώτας λαβὰς ἐπανέλθοιμι.*

flattery and lies about his grandfather had faded away, everyone flattering the one sitting on the throne, no one exhibiting flattery toward the departed, the events were laid bare and told just as they had happened[37]". This discussion of her research methods implicated Anna in prolonged conversations with men, not all of whom were relatives. This revelation prompts a second interruption of self-abasing claims of misfortune: the description of her isolation with which we opened this discussion. Following her claim to seclusion, Anna returns to her main topic and sums up her methods: "The detailed narrations of the old men were the same as the writings in word and meaning; I judged the truth of the history from them, collecting and comparing the things I had learned myself with those things they told me, and the things they told me with what I had from frequently listening to my father and my uncles on my mother's and father's side. From all these things the body of the truth was woven together"[38]. This is a deeply empowering statement for historian, but a transgressive one for a woman living in a culture which expected women to leave their homes only for religious observances, talk only to their relatives, and have no interest in politics.

This context can help explain why Anna included a claim to isolation at this point in her history. Insofar as her research methods made her seem immodest and lacking in appropriate female decorum, Anna needed to provide a countering presentation that would lead her audience to see her as cloistered and demure. By claiming some sort of isolation, she mitigated against the transgression of her numerous conversations with men. Yet she still wanted her audience to believe that she had conducted extensive research, and so was unwilling to completely negate her claims to gathering information from her father's veterans. This gives rise, I think, to her unexpected switch to a

37. *Ibidem*, XIV.7.5: vol. I, 451.47-452.52: *ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τούτων συνελεξάμην, καὶ κράτιστα ἐπὶ τοῦ μετὰ τὸν ἐμὸν πατέρα τρίτου τὰ τῆς βασιλείας σκῆπτρα διέποντος, ὅτε καὶ πᾶσα κολακεία καὶ ψεῦδος τῷ πάππῳ αὐτῷ συναπέρρευσε, πάντων τὸν ἐφιστάμενον μὲν θρόνον κολακευόντων, πρὸς δὲ τὸν ἀπερρυηκότα μηδέν τι μὲν θωπείας ἐνδεικνυμένων, γυμνὰ δὲ τὰ πράγματα διηγουμένων καὶ αὐτὰ λεγόντων ὥσπερ ἐσχήκασιν.*

38. *Ibidem*, XIV.7.7: vol. I, 452.72-453.79: *τὰ δὲ παρὰ τῶν γεραιτέρων ἐκδιηγούμενα τῆς αὐτῆς ἦσαν καὶ λέξεως καὶ διανοίας τῶν συγγραμμάτων ἐχόμενα· καὶ ἐτεκμηράμην ἐξ αὐτῶν τὴν τῆς ἱστορίας ἀλήθειαν, συμβάλλουσα καὶ παρεξετάζουσα τὰ παρ' ἐμαυτῆς ἱστορούμενα πρὸς τὰ παρ' ἐκείνων λεγόμενα καὶ τὰ παρ' ἐκείνων πρὸς τὰ παρ' ἐμαυτῆς, ἅπερ αὐτὴ ἐξ αὐτοῦ τε τοὐμοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῶν πρὸς πατρὸς καὶ μητρὸς ἐμοὶ θείων ἠκηκόειν πολλάκις· ἀφ' ὧν ἁπάντων τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἅπαν σῶμα συνεξυφαίνεται.*

masculine plural grammatical gender which implies that the isolation of which she complains is a state affecting not only herself, but some larger class of men as well. The "we" who are condemned to obscurity consists, it seems, of all her "father's people." As well as being far more obscure than Anna's regular prose style, this claim of enforced isolation is vague in the same way that Anna's earlier claim to have suffered wave upon wave of misfortune is unspecified. It functions, I believe, not to disclose any accurate biographical information, but to create an impression that Anna was a lonely piteous widow who deserved goodwill and care, rather than condemnation for moral transgressions[39].

I see no reason to believe this passage refers to a 'real' monastic seclusion any more than her previous interruption referred to 'real' waves of misfortune that she suffered continuously since her infancy. These are not genuine moments of self-disclosure, but calculated performances of emotion that were intended to play upon the affective responses of Anna's audience. Scholars who want to interpret these passages as revealing the political reality that Anna was forced to live in a monastery need to explain why this information shows up in the middle of the discussion of historical sources. Why would Anna choose to present this information in this context? The scholars who see this is referring to Anna's monastic retirement seem to think that Anna expressed these sentiments here because she simply couldn't contain herself. Yet those thinking that Anna burst into self-pity because she could not restrain her emotions need to explain what it was about talking about historical methodology that set Anna off. The *Alexiad* is a long enough book that it seems safe to assume Anna enjoyed thinking about and writing history. The thought that such a skilled rhetorician would become so emotionally unhinged as to lose control of her discourse because of a discussion of historical sources seems rather far-fetched. Rather we should start with the assumption that Anna was performing an emotion in order to provoke an emotion in us, and then try to figure out why she did so.

The scholars who first connected this passage with the information in Eirene's charter for Kecharitomene were largely ignorant of the corpus of rhetoric that suggests Anna remained at court[40]. Had they known of these texts, it is unlikely that anyone would have suggested Anna lived full-time at Kecharitomene. Now that we have a larger body of information, and

39. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 80-88.

40. Much of the court rhetoric has been published in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The first historian I found to suggest that Anna retired to Kecharitomene was E. OSTER, *Anna Komnena*, Rastatt 1868, 71-72. NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 171-174.

understand better the rhetorical functions of her emotional self-portrayal in the *Alexiad*, it seems we should omit a monastic retirement from Anna's biography.

Now we can return to the question of what Anna and Eirene may have gained by having residences within the precinct of the Kecharitomene monastery and why, at times, they may have chosen to stay there. The royal apartments Kecharitomene must have been one of several palatial residences owned by Anna. Eirene's charter certainly presents it is as perfectly normal for Anna to have two different apartments within Kecharitomene, and nothing indicates that these were her only houses. The surviving preface to her will indicates that she had substantial property to dispose upon her death[41]. It appears that she had the option of living in one of her apartments in Kecharitomene, even while her husband was alive[42]. The preponderance of evidence indicates that Anna and Nikephoros maintained a devoted and functional marriage, so we need to imagine situations in which she would be staying at the monastery some of the time and with her husband at their palace the rest of the time[43].

George Tornikes describes Anna in her funeral oration as having interacted with male scholars of classical literature, science, and philosophy throughout her life. He also explains how her pursuit of higher education was seen as a moral danger from which all reasonable parents would wish to shield a daughter. Tornikes maintains that Anna's extraordinary personal virtue gave her the exceptional strength needed, as a woman, to gain a classical education without risking moral corruption. His text lets us know much about Anna's intellectual life, but also precisely how risqué and morally dubious her pursuit of knowledge was seen within her culture[44].

---

41. PAPAIOANNOU, Anna Komnene's Will (as in footnote 5), 101-108.

42. Anna was described as living in those rooms in the appendix written by Eirene. Both George Tornikes' *Funeral Oration* (as in footnote 1), 295 and the *Alexias* (XV.11.22: vol. I, 504.33-505.44) indicate that Eirene died before Nikephoros. Since it seems secure that Eirene died first, Anna was resident in the monastery before the death of her husband.

43. Theodoros Prodromos wrote a poem (*Επιτάφιοι τῇ γυναικὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πανευτυχεστάτου καίσαρος κυροῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Βρυεννίου, κυρᾷ Θεοδώρᾳ*, ed. HÖRANDNER, *Theodoros Prodromos*, as in footnote 5, 383) in which he throws himself into extremes of mourning for Nikephoros Bryennios before an audience that would have included Anna. This performance would have been simply impolite, and would not have earned Prodromos another commission, if Anna had not been mourning Nikephoros sincerely.

44. George Tornikes, *Funeral Oration* (as in footnote 1), 224-322; NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 120-131. 20.

Given that one of the key impediments to interacting with male scholars was the basic impropriety of men intermingling with women to whom they were not married, a monastic residence may have afforded Anna a far greater range of freedom for her intellectual pursuits. As a married woman, Anna's interactions with men other than her husband would be deeply problematic. In those periods in which Nikephoros was serving John outside of the capital, Anna's contacts with other men would have been particularly suspect. Anna would need to be chaperoned. Only a few decades earlier Kekaumenos had advised that a man should never let a guest into his house because he would seduce his wife, or boast that he had on the battlefield[45]. In Kekaumenos' mind letting a stranger into a man's house was an invitation to the seduction of his wife and the destruction of his honor[46]. Both Nikephoros and Anna would have had a strong interest in minimizing the appearance of impropriety engendered by Anna's studies. Moving into her palatial apartments in Kecharitomene while her husband was on campaign may have allowed Anna greater freedom to continue discussing philosophy and classical literature with the intellectual lights of the city.

For the men who enjoyed discussing philosophy with Anna, and whose studies she patronized, it was probably far more socially acceptable to visit her at Kecharitomene. We know that both male and female servants had free access to Eirene's apartment that Anna was due to inherit. One wonders if they could have accessed her apartment on the wall between Philanthropos and Kecharitomene via the men's monastery. The gossips would have less to talk about if the male philosophers were simply visiting a men's monastery. Even if they had to enter her apartment in Kecharitomene, interacting with a princess was presumably safer for reputation and honor when she was staying in a monastery.

In his defense of Anna's intellectualism, George Tornikes portrays Anna's deep Christian piety as a shield against the corrupting influences of ancient philosophy and literature. With great rhetorical sleight-of-hand Tornikes casts her pursuit of ancient philosophy as a Christian response to grief[47]. Tornikes'

45. Kekaumenos, *Strategikon* (ed. M. D. SPADARO, *Raccomandazioni e consigli di un galantuomo (Στρατηγικόν)*, Alessandria 1998), 148-150.

46. *Ibidem*, 150-152.

47. George Tornikes, *Funeral Oration* (as in footnote 1), 271-285; NEVILLE, *Anna Komnene* (as in footnote 21), 122-125.

use of piety lets us know how Anna's culture saw Christian devotion as an insulation against bad moral behaviour. Clearly the more pious Anna appeared, the less trouble people gave her about studying Plato and Aristotle. Hence she may have appreciated the ability to stay in Kecharitomene because it associated her with pious Christian nuns, without binding her to a monastic practice and discipline. Philosophers could visit Anna without incurring suspicion because her reputation for piety, substantiated by her monastic residence, was simply above suspicion.

One further reason may have led Anna to occasionally stay in her apartments in Kecharitomene. In 1929 the English feminist Virginia Woolf argued in her famous essay *A Room of One's Own* that women's creativity was curtailed by the absence of material support and simply spaces where they could pursue intellectual projects: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction[48]". Woolf was talking about fiction writing, and of course, her society and culture were a world away from Anna's. Yet the fundamental point that, in order to write, a woman would need a place to write in, seems valid in both contexts. Anna had plenty of money, which allowed her the leisure time and access to appropriate materials for her intellectual life, and she likely had plenty of rooms in various houses that she could devote to her intellectual activities. But one can imagine that her apartment betwixt her parents' monasteries may have been a particularly congenial place to find quiet time for writing, free from the interruptions of children and grandchildren, nieces and cousins, and calls for advice on the problem of the day, the question of the hour, or whatever ache or pain could use a bit of Anna's medical knowledge. The interruptions of grandchildren are delightful, and we should vigorously resist the old prejudice that Anna could not have been an affectionate mother because she had interests that extended beyond the nursery. Yet I think it quite likely that Anna would have delighted in a place that would allow her several contiguous hours of uninterrupted time to write.

For all these reasons Anna may well have enjoyed spending some days living in her apartments at Kecharitomene. Occasionally she may even have taken a meal with the nuns in the refectory, as allowed in her mother's charter. Kecharitomene quite clearly was not a fancy prison for Anna. Rather, residing in the monastery probably brought Anna freedom: freedom to interact with

48. VIRGINIA WOOLF, *A Room of One's Own*, ed. D. BRADSHAW and ST. CLARKE, Malden 2015, 3.

male intellectuals, freedom from scandal, freedom from domestic distractions. Although Anna only took monastic vows as she was dying, her story suggests that perhaps her association with the monastery helped to enable her remarkable intellectual achievements.

Marina Bazzani*

(Male and) Female Protagonists in the Poems of Manuel Philes

The poetic work of Manuel Philes in recent years has increasingly become the focus of interest and long needed analysis, despite the lack of a reliable complete critical edition and the often cryptic complexity of his verses[1]. The intense scrutiny under which art historians have submitted Philes' verses in the last 20 years gave rise to a renewed literary appreciation[2], which is constantly picking up pace, and has so far resulted in the important studies of Efthymia Braounou-Pietsch, who has shown the depth of thought and stylistic refinement present

* University of Oxford.

1. For the majority of Philes' occasional poems scholars still rely on the following printed editions: Manuel Philes, *Στίχοι διάφοροι τοῦ σοφωτάτου καὶ λογιωτάτου Φιλῆ ἐπὶ διαφόροις ὑποθέσεσι*, ed. E. Miller, *Manuelis Philae Carmina ex codicibus Escurialensibus, Florentinis, Parisinis et Vaticanis*, 2 vols, Paris 1855-1857, repr. Amsterdam 1967 (= *Manuelis Philae Carmina*); *Manuelis Philae Carmina Inedita*, ed. E. Martini [Atti della R. Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti, vol. 20, suppl.], Naples 1900. A limited number of poems is found also in M. Gedeon, Μανουὴλ τοῦ Φιλῆ ἱστορικὰ ποιήματα, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Ἀλήθεια* 3 (1882-1883), 215-220, 246-250, 655-659. These editions are dated and rife with mistakes, but are still extremely valuable. The poems inserted in the text come from Miller's edition, the roman number indicates the volume, the numeral indicates the page. A thorough survey of early modern studies and editions of Philes' works can be found in G. Stickler, *Manuel Philes und seine Psalmenmetaphrase* [Dissertationen der Universität Wien 229], Vienna 1992, 56-95.

2. I. Kalavrezou-Maxeiner, *Byzantine Icons in Steatite* [Byzantina Vindobonensia 15], Vienna 1985, 79-85; S. Takács, Manuel Philes' Meditation on an Icon of the Virgin Mary, *BF* 15 (1990), 277-288; A.-M. Talbot, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges and its Art, *DOP* 48 (1994), 135-165; Eadem, Epigrams in Context: Metrical Inscriptions on Art and Architecture of the Palaiologan Era, *DOP* 53 (1999), 75-90; S. Brooks, Poetry and Female Patronage in Late Byzantine Tomb Decoration. Two Epigrams by Manuel Philes, *DOP* 60 (2006), 224-248. See also I. Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium*, Cambridge 2016.

in Philes' epigrams[3]; and more recently in Ivan Drpić's book on epigrams, art and devotion, which, although not focused solely on Philes, still greatly enhances our knowledge and comprehension of this difficult author, as well as his relationship with his patrons[4].

I have worked on Philes for several years now; initially, my interest was mainly directed to personal and occasional poems of requests investigating the ways in which the poet depicted himself in his verses[5]. Slowly, however, this analysis has developed and has touched upon different aspects and types of poems, due also to the difficulty to understand a complex poet like Philes without exploring all aspects of his poetic outpouring. Personal and occasional poems always presuppose a relationship between the author and his recipients, be it in the guise of friendship, homage or subservience; I have often looked at how Philes relates to his patrons, and I realised that the vast majority of epigrams I considered was addressed to men; certainly a consequence of the fact that Philes had found patronage with some of the most powerful court and army officers of his time. Conversely, the situation is rather different and more varied when one looks at commissioned devotional epigrams; for the poet often composes on behalf of women patrons, and this instance offers the opportunity to shift the focus of the investigation from the author to his clients,

3. E. Braounou-Pietsch, Die Stummheit des Bildes. Ein Motiv in Epigramme des Manuel Philes, *JÖB* 57 (2007), 135-148; Eadem, Manuel Philes und die übernatürliche Macht der Epigrammdichtung, in: *Die kulturhistorische Bedeutung byzantinischer Epigramme. Akten des internationalen Workshop*, ed. by W. Hörandner and A. Rhoby [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 371. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 15], Vienna 2008, 85-92; E. Braounou-Pietsch, Ein Aspekt der Rezeption der Anthologia Planudea in Epigrammen des Manuel Philes auf Bilder, in: *Imitatio-aemulatio-variatio. Akten des internationalen wissenschaftlichen Symposions zur byzantinischen Sprache und Literatur (Wien, 22.-25. Oktober 2008)*, ed. by A. Rhoby and E. Schiffer [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 402. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 21], Vienna 2010, 217-230. The most significant study is the following because it presents a new critical edition: E. Braounou-Pietsch, *Beseelte Bilder. Epigramme des Manuel Philes auf bildliche Darstellungen* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl., Denkschriften 416. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 26], Vienna 2010.

4. Drpić, *Epigram, Art* (as in footnote 2), passim. On Philes' rapport with his patrons, see K. Kubina, Manuel Philes and the Asan Family, *JÖB* 63 (2013), 177-198.

5. M. Bazzani, A Poem of Philes to Makarios Chrysokephalos? The Case of Poem Florentinus 58, *BZ* 104 (2011), 55-69.

and to scrutinise Philes' approach toward female patrons, as well as the way in which he conveys the voice and the emotions of female commissioners (and protagonists) of devotional epigrams, in order to compare them and see if it is possible to single out differences in style and attitude.

In the first part of this paper I shall focus upon a few epigrams addressed to male and female patrons of different social status, mainly compositions in which Philes puts forward demands for help and gifts, to ascertain if and how the tone changes according to the gender of the addressee. In the second part of the paper, instead I shall consider poems commissioned to Philes by men and women as *ex-voto*, often meant to accompany a devotional gift of some sort, such an icon or a precious adornment for it. This survey is by no means comprehensive due to the large number of compositions that should be considered to make it inclusive; it still is a work in progress, yet I hope it may expose further facets of Philes' poetic personality.

Let us begin with two poems dedicated respectively to the emperor and the empress, the mightiest and most unreachable among the poet's patrons.

The first poem I am going to consider is *Paris. 200*, a short composition to the emperor in which Philes compares and contrasts God's renewing action on nature at springtime to the ruler's neglect toward his poet.

Πρὸς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα.[6]

Ὁ σὸς βασιλεύς, ὁ βραβεὺς τῶν κτισμάτων, (1)
Χιτῶνα καινὸν συντιθεὶς ἀπὸ χλόης,
Ἢ νήθεται μὲν ἐξ ἀποκρύφου κρόκης,
Ὑφαίνεται δὲ τῷ προσήκοντι χρόνῳ,
Στολίζεται δὲ ταῖς βαφαῖς τῶν ἀνθέων, (5)
Τὴν πρὶν ἀκαλλῆ καὶ ψιλὴν γῆν φαιδρύνει.
Σὺ δ', ὦ βασιλεῦ, τὸν Φιλῆν παρατρέχεις,
Τὴν γῆν με τὴν σὴν, τὴν πατουμένην κόνιν.
Καὶ ποῦ θεμιτὸν εἰς φιλάνθρωπον φύσιν,
Ἢ Χριστὸν αὐτόν ἐστιν ἐκμιμουμένη; (10)
Οὐ κρύπτεται γὰρ οὐδαμῶς ἡ γυμνότης,
Εἰ καὶ τὸ πεινῆν συσκιάζοι τις τάχα.

"To the emperor.
Your king, the arbiter of creation,

6. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 211 (*Paris. 200*).

Creating a new vestment of grass
That is spun from a hidden thread,
And is woven at the convenient time,
And is adorned with the dyes of flowers,
Embellishes the earth that before was without beauty and barren.
But you, o emperor, neglect your Philes,
Your ground, your trodden dust.
And how is this righteous for a philanthropic nature
That imitates Christ himself?
For my nakedness in no wise lies hidden,
Even if someone should hide my hunger"[7].

Philes does not open the epigram with a direct address to the emperor, rather he describes the reviving action of God, the creator and ruler's king, who covers the earth with a new vestment of grass and flowers in spring; after such an idyllic picture of renewal, the audience would expect a similar description of the conduct of the emperor; Philes instead catches his reader unaware by claiming that the emperor neglects him, even though he considers himself the emperor's trampled soil. Hence, the poet wonders in disbelief how the imperial nature that imitates Christ's can act in such a manner: for it is unacceptable for the ruler to ignore those in need on account of his philanthropia[8]. By cleverly playing with word order, the repetition of the word *βασιλεύς*, which places the emperor on an equal level with God, as well as the prominent position that the poet reserves to his name in the same verse, Philes conveys his criticism of the emperor's inadequacy to care for him, and, at the same time, also an oblique, yet manifest accusation of betraying the love for mankind expected of Byzantine rulers, with the consequent risk that the poverty of the poet be eventually revealed to the world and smear the emperor's image. Here Philes, while honouring the emperor, is also disclosing some of the fundamental rules of patronage; as it emerges clearly from many of Philes' epigrams, and, also, as Ivan Drpić has convincingly argued, the patron-client relationship is one of exchange and mutual interest, even though obligations are disguised behind

7. The translation of this epigram, as well as of the next four are mine.

8. On philanthropia, see D. J. CONSTANTELOS, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, New Brunswick-New Jersey 1968; IDEM, *Poverty, Society, and Philanthropy in the Late Mediaeval Greek World*, New Rochelle, New York 1992.

the appearance of friendship, or even love, and homage[9]; patronage involves a public bond which is seen by others, and therefore the bond of friendship needs to be reciprocated to avoid the risk that the image of a noble patron, or in this case the ruler's, be tarnished in the eyes of people.

Let us now consider a poem dedicated to the empress; *Esc. 199* is a short epigram composed in response to the empress' withdrawal from the poet of some tax benefits. This epigram too reveals a rather unexpected side of Philes' disposition, although he seemingly abides by all the predictable rules of homage.

Ἐπιγράμματα εἰς τὴν δέσποιναν ὅταν ἀφῄρηται τὴν οἰκονομίαν αὐτοῦ.[10]

Ἤδη γράφειν τολμῶντι συγγίνωσκέ μοι, (1)
Τῶν Αὐσόνων ἄνασσα συμπαθεστάτη.
Δέσποινά μου, τολμῶντι συγγίνωσκέ μοι·
Δέσποινά μου, πεινῶντα, διψῶντα, ξένον,
Γυμνόν, ταπεινόν, δυστυχῆ, τεθλιμμένον, (5)
Δέσποινα φιλάνθρωπε, μὴ παραδράμῃς.
Δέσποινά μου, τολμῶντι συγγίνωσκέ μοι·
Ἐπείγεται γὰρ ἐκδραμεῖν τῆς καρδίας
Τὸ πῦρ, ὁ καπνός, ἡ δριμύτης, ὁ βρόμος.

"Epigrams to the empress when she withdraws his pronoia.
Forgive me now as I dare write,
Most compassionate queen of the Ausonians,
Mistress, forgive me because I am daring;
Mistress, the famished, thirsty, foreigner,
The naked, miserable, unlucky, afflicted,
Me, most humane mistress, do not neglect.
Mistress, forgive me because I am bold:
Indeed fire, smoke, acridness, crackling,
Hasten to spring up from my heart."

9. Drpić, *Epigram, Art* (as in footnote 2), 315-331.

10. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 97-98 (*Esc. 199*). This is probably a "pronoia", a sustainence grant of some sort given to Philes by the empress, as from the time of Michael VIII the terms *πρόνοια* and *οἰκονομία* were used interchangeably. On this topic, see M. C. Bartusis, *Land and Privilege in Byzantium: The Institution of Pronoia*, Cambridge 2012, 251-258 and 283-300.

Philes starts the poem with a request for forgiveness because he dares petition the empress[11]. Such an opening appears very conventional, as it highlights the difference in status between the author and his noble recipient; also the anaphorical repetition of *δέσποινά μου* at the beginning of ll. 3, 4, 6 and 7 emulates the model of pressing requests that Philes addresses to his patrons in numerous compositions. Yet, the choice of epithets picked to describe the empress reveal a sarcastic and subversive tone, which sneaks through the repeated pleas for forgiveness and the humble submission of the author. For Philes defines the empress *συμπαθεστάτη* and *δέσποινα φιλάνθρωπε*, while he describes himself rather dramatically as naked, starving and miserable; and by doing so, he reminds the empress of the disastrous consequences that may fall upon him following the deprivation of the subsidy. By underlining virtues that the empress is clearly lacking from his point of view, Philes generates irony and thus is able to expose the shortcomings of the *laudanda* in her role by means of contrast between the supposed philanthropic attitude of the empress and his pitiable condition[12]. A discrete accomplishment that is even more remarkable as Philes is keeping up with the expected appearances of submission, but which undoubtedly would not escape the trained ears of the members of the Byzantine imperial court. Margaret Mullett has compellingly argued that late Byzantine imperial panegyrics could contain tactful and carefully crafted criticism of authority: the *laudator* had at his disposal many ways to subvert the *laudandus*, tools such as significant omissions and substitutions of centuries long rhetorical prescriptions, inappropriate comparisons, irony, and subversion of the topoi[13], and these verses by Philes are a fine example of such occurrence. In this instance, although Philes reveals the failure of both the ruler and his spouse, he

11. Probably Yolanda/Eirene, second wife of Andronikos II, empress from 1288 to 1317; see *PLP* 21361.

12. See M. MULLETT, How to Criticize the Laudandus, in: *Power and Subversion in Byzantium: Papers from the Forty-third Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, March 2010*, ed. by D. ANGELOV and M. SAXBY [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 17], Farnham 2013, 247-262; the whole book offers a thorough analysis of subversive processes in Byzantium.

13. A. KAZHDAN and G. CONSTABLE, *People and Power in Byzantium. An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies*, Washington, D.C. 1982, 140-161; D. ANGELOV, Byzantine Imperial Panegyric as Advice Literature (1204-ca. 1350), in: *Rhetoric in Byzantium: Papers from the Thirty-fifth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Exeter College, University of Oxford, March 2001*, ed. by E. JEFFREYS [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 11], Aldershot 2003, 55-72.

does so in a somewhat different manner; for he vents his disappointment and denounces the emperor's neglect openly, while he only alludes to the iniquity of the empress when addressing her.

Philes dedicates countless poems of request also to his noble acquaintances; I would now like to consider a few epigrams written to ask for gifts of wine, and addressed to both men and women. Poem *Paris. 106* is a short epigram to an unspecified friend to claim a gift of wine, which has apparently been promised to the poet. In this instance, Philes draws inspiration from the gift of wine, develops his verses around the semantic sphere related to viticulture, and finally lingers on the therapeutic and consolatory effect of the gift.

Πρός τινα τῶν φίλων.[14]

Ὁ τῶν φυσικῶν ἀμπελὼν χαρισμάτων, (1)
Τὸν οἶνον ἡμῖν ὡς ἐπηγγείλω δίδου·
Τὴν γὰρ φιλικὴν εὐφρανεῖς μοι καρδίαν,
Ἀθυμίας ἅπασαν ἐξαίρων μέθην.

"To one of the friends.
O vineyard of natural gifts,
Give me the wine, as you promised;
For you will gladden my dear heart,
Lifting completely the drunkness of despondency".

The poem opens with Philes' flattering appeal to his friend, whom he describes as a vineyard of gifts. The initial homage is mitigated by the forceful request of the imperative *δίδου* that appears in the following line; Philes moves then to explain the motive for his request: a promise from his recipient, which he attempts to make more pressing and less avaricious by mentioning the cheering effect that the wine will have on the poet's despondent heart. This epigram is characterised from the start by the unifying theme of the vine, thanks to the prominent position of *ἀμπελὼν* in l.1, followed by the demand for wine. Philes places *ἡμῖν* in an emphatic position as it is the focus of both *δίδου* and *ἐπηγγείλω*, a verb that in its middle voice means to offer of one's free will (LSJ s.v.); by reminding his friend of his promise, the poet again brings to the fore the bond of friendship and patronage that connects the two and that cannot be broken without upsetting social conventions and damaging one's repute. The

14. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 150 (*Paris. 106*).

decisiveness of l. 2 is tempered by the allusion to the wine's consoling effects on the poet's desolation, which acquires relevance due to its position at the start of the last verse. The concluding lines conceal a whole net of biblical allusions; in l. 3 Philes is clearly alluding to the uplifting effects of wine following the Psalms[15], and at the same time he finds the way to draw again attention to himself, in an oblique yet visible way by using the adjective *φιλικήν*; this certainly refers to the friendly relationship between poet and patron, but it is also a pun alluding to the poet's name. Finally, in the closing line, Philes reconnects to the Scriptures, where it is recommended to give wine to those who are anguished, so that they may forget about their desolation[16]. As usual the poet manages to pull together the different strands of his inspiration into a coherent unity thanks to an elaborate thinking process that his audience would likely acknowledge.

Flor. 235 is another short epigram that centres on wine[17].

Εἰς τὸν Κυζίκου.[18]

Ἐν Κυζίκῳ τὸν οἶνον ἀφθόνως πίνειν (1)
Οὐδέν τι καινόν· ἐν δὲ τῇ Βυζαντίδι
Καὶ μάλα καινὸν, θαυμάσιε δέσποτα.
Τὸν Κυζικηνὸν τοιγαροῦν γλεῦκος δίδου
Διψῶντα σαφῆ μὴ παρατρέχων φίλον. (5)

"To the (metropolitan?) of Kyzikos.
Drinking plentiful wine in Kyzikos
Is nothing new: but in Byzantium,
Admirable master, it is very scarce.
Give therefore sweet new wine to the one from Kyzikos,
And do not neglect your true friend".

Reminiscing about the abundant wine-drinking occurred in Kyzikos, Philes complains about the shortage of the beverage he, surprisingly, is experiencing

15. Psalm 103.15.1: *καὶ οἶνος εὐφραίνει καρδίαν ἀνθρώπου.*

16. Proverbs 31. 6-7: *δίδοτε μέθην τοῖς ἐν λύπαις καὶ οἶνον πίνειν τοῖς ἐν ὀδύναις, ἵνα ἐπιλάθωνται τῆς πενίας καὶ τῶν πόνων μὴ μνησθῶσιν ἔτι.*

17. On drinking wine, see I. ANAGNOSTAKIS, *Ο οίνος στην ποίηση. Οίνος ο Βυζαντινός. Η άμπελος και ο οίνος στη βυζαντινή ποίηση και υμνογραφία*, Athens 1995, vol. II/1-3, 121-136, 221-236 with comments and bibliography.

18. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 435-436 (*Flor. 235*). On this epigram, see ANAGNOSTAKIS, *Ο οίνος στην ποίηση*, 223-225.

in the capital; therefore, he demands his patron[19] not to neglect his thirsty friend, but to give him sweet wine. In respect to the previous epigram, this one is lacking the numerous biblical allusions, except, perhaps, for the term *γλεῦκος*, new wine[20]; nonetheless, these verses are invested with analogous bluntness in the use of the imperative *δίδου*, which closes l. 4 emphasising the urgency of the request, as well as in the centrally placed *μὴ παρατρέχων* that warns the poem's recipient not to disregard his poet and the bond that ties the two.

Similarly in *Esc. 233*, Philes entreats one of the emperor's nieces for a gift of wine.

Τῇ βασιλέως ἀνεψιᾷ τῇ Συργιαννίνα, διὰ τὸν οἶνον.[21]
Τὴν ἄμπελον θεοῦ σε τὴν πτωχοτρόφον (1)
Τὸ γλεῦκος αἰτῶ καὶ πιεῖν θᾶττον θέλω
Τὰς γὰρ σταφυλὰς εὐτυχεῖς τῶν πρακτέων,
Αἳ τὴν τρύγην ἔχουσιν εἰς πάντα χρόνον.

"To Syrgiannina, the niece of the emperor, for the wine.
You, vine of God, supporter of the poor,
I ask for sweet new wine, and I want to drink swiftly;
You are laden with grapes of gifts,
Whose vintage lasts forever".

In this epigram religious undertones and metaphorical language are brought back to the fore from the beginning, as the poet describes the Syrgiannina as 'vineyard of God' and supporter of the poor. Although Philes' goal is yet again unmistakable, he alters his *modus operandi*: in these verses, rather than commanding the noble patroness to give him wine, thus making her both the

19. The addressee of this verses could possibly be identified with Niphon, metropolitan of Kyzikos from 1303 to 1310, who then became patriarch of Constantinople until his deposition in 1314 and to whom Philes dedicated several epigrams; see *PLP* 20679. On the metropolitans of Kyzikos, see J. PREISER-KAPELLER, *Der Episkopat im späten Byzanz*, Saarbrücken 2008, 212-218, in particular 214-215.

20. Job, 32.19: *ἡ δὲ γαστήρ μου ὥσπερ ἀσκὸς γλεύκους ζέων δεδεμένος ἢ ὥσπερ φυσητὴρ χαλκέως ἐρρηγώς.*

21. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 123 (*Esc. 233*). The recipient is probably Maria Doukaina Palaiologina, niece of Andronikos II and wife of the megas dux John Palaiologos Philanthropenos Komnenos; see *PLP* 27168 and 27167. On this epigram, see ANAGNOSTAKIS, *Ο οίνος στην ποίηση* (as in footnote 17), 226-227.

target and the agent of his demand, the poet makes himself the focal point of his appeal by expressing his eagerness to obtain the wine and drink it quickly. As seen above in *Esc. 199*, also in this epigram Philes seems to mitigate the bluntness of his appeal when directed to a female recipient; previously he used the imperative to obtain forgiveness from the empress, whose eminence and status clearly outweighed his, whereas in this case Philes avoids addressing his female interlocutor imperiously, and resorts to depict himself in an unattractive manner instead, as if the imperative mode was deemed too forceful in this circumstance when directed to a woman of imperial stock.

The kinder way of expressing himself in *Esc. 199* and of conveying his request in *Esc. 233*, however, does by no means hinder the poet from voicing disappointment toward the empress and judging her actions with sarcasm and resentment; indeed, thanks to his mastery, Philes manages to criticise his imperial recipients and scold their lack of generosity by means of irony. A careful reading of the previous compositions reveals how the poet hides his chastising attitude behind obsequious praises and how sometimes the genuine meaning of an epigram needs to be sought under several layers of meaning, for Philes often meddles with the text and uses allusions as a deliberate strategy to express his dissent against the *status quo* and to vent his deepest opinions.

I would now like to turn to dedicatory poems composed by Philes on behalf of female and male patrons. The majority of these compositions are dedicated to Christ, the Virgin Mary or various saints as thank offerings presented for miracles granted to the donors, or as prayers to petition for specific graces; in most cases, however, these are usually linked to the sphere of health, or more specifically, ill health. Epigrams of this type are numerous and cannot be analysed closely in their entirety; therefore, I shall consider only a selection of them. A comparison and an analysis of the differences that emerge from these poems will shed light on Philes' way of engaging with and portraying his patrons with respect to their gender.

Esc. 162, *166*, *Flor. 41*, *Paris. 126*, *156* are epigrams commissioned by male devotees, while *Paris. 110*, *Esc. 161*, *163*, *164*, *165* are similar compositions but spoken as from female donors. When one reads epigrams to Mary or Christ dedicated by male and female devotees as *ex voto*, what leaps to the eye is a shared tone of devotion towards the divine recipient, which is expressed through the usage of honorific titles, expressions of extreme humbleness, awe and love. However, what emerges more evidently, in my opinion, is the level of personal disclosure and involvement that characterised the donors in the words of the poet, and which seems to be correlated to gender.

Indeed, men appear to offer icons with the accompanying dedicatory epigrams usually as thank-offerings for the honours and wealth that their divine protector has bestowed upon them; at the same time, they request that these benefits may continue to be granted, but these pleas are brought forward without any recollection, if not very rarely, of their families and wives; reciprocity, which represents one of the fundamental elements of divine and human patronage, is expected and acknowledged, but its field of action is restricted to the devotee and the benefactor. Conversely, epigrams commissioned and spoken as if by women reveal greater disclosure, more intimate interaction with the divine protector, as well as the tendency to reach out beyond the strictly binary relation between benefactor and benefitted; for women's appeals nearly always contains, next to personal devotion and individual petitions, also intense feelings of concern for the other –husband and children– as I hope it will emerge clearly from the following texts.

Εἰς τὴν ὑπέραγνον θεοτόκον.[22]

Ὕδωρ μὲν εἰ πίνοιμι, λαμβάνω κόρον· (1)
Τῆς φύσεως γὰρ συγγενὲς πάθος τόδε·
Τῶν σῶν δὲ καλῶν ἐμφορούμενος χύδην,
Ὡς ἀπὸ πηγῆς ἐκρεούσης ἀφθόνως,
Οὐ λαμβάνω, πάναγνε Μαριάμ, κόρον. (5)
Οὐκοῦν δέχου τὸ σῶστρον ἐκ χρυσαργύρου,
Καὶ τὴν χύσιν πήγασε τῶν τεραστίων.
Φησὶ Μανουὴλ Βαρδαλῆς τῇ παρθένῳ.

"To the all-pure Mother of God.
If I drink water, I am satiated,
For this is a natural experience.
But even though I am filled bountifully with thy blessings,
As if from an abundantly flowing spring,
I am not satiated, all holy Mary.
Therefore accept this thank-offering of gold and silver,
And gush forth a stream of miracles.
So says Manuel Bardales to the Virgin"[23].

22. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 73 (*Esc. 162*). Manuel Bardales is known only from this epigram; see *PLP* 2184. On these verses, see TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 153-154.

23. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 154.

Εἰς τὴν θεοτόκον ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ Μουζάλωνος.[24]

Ἐκ σπαργάνων μὲν ἔσχον, ἁγνή, σὲ σκέπειν (1)
Τῆς μητρὸς αὐτόθεν με παραπεμψάσης·
Ἀφ' οὗ δὲ καιροῦ καὶ λογισμῶν ἠψάμην,
Ἐμαυτὸν αὐτὸς δῶρον εἰσήνεγκά σοι,
Κἀντεῦθεν ἡ σὴ παντοδαπὴ χρηστότης (5)
Ἐς δεῦρο πολλῶν ἀξιοῖ με θαυμάτων.
Τὰ γὰρ ἀτερπῆ τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πάθη
Πηγῆς νοητῆς ἐμβολαῖς ἀποπλύνεις.
Νόσων δὲ πανσώτειρα συμπνίγεις δέος,
Φρουροῦσα τῆς σῆς δεξιᾶς με τῷ κράτει. (10)
Τίς οὖν ἀμοιβὴ καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν ἀρκέσει
Οὐκ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ἀλλὰ σὺ πάλιν σκέπε,
Καὶ προῖκα ταῖς σαῖς δωρεαῖς πλούτιζέ με.
Θεόδωρός σοι ταῦτά φησι Μουζάλων.

Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς θεομήτορος.[25]

Ἐκ σπαργάνων πλουτῶν σε θερμὴν προστάτιν (1)
Ἐγραψάμην σε πρῶτον ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ·
Τὸ δεύτερον δὲ ζωγραφῶ σου τὸν τύπον,
Ἵνα σε καὶ κατ' ὄψιν ὡς ἔμπνουν βλέπω.
Σὺ γάρ με πολλῶν ἀξιοῖς τεραστίων, (5)
Καὶ ζῶ παρὰ σοὶ καὶ στεγάζω τὸν βίον
Εἰς τὴν ἀκαταίσχυντον εὐελπιστίαν.
Κοσμῶ δὲ φαιδρῷ τὴν γραφὴν χρυσαργύρῳ,
Καὶ παραγυμνῶ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸν πόθον
Τῶν ἀρετῶν τὸ κάλλος ἐξαιτούμενος· (10)
Σὺ δ', ὦ κόρη πάναγνε, βιβλίον, τόμε,
Καὶ πλὰξ θεοῦ γραφεῖσα δακτύλῳ ξένῳ,
Τοῖς σωστικοῖς σου βιβλίοις μετεγγράφοις
Γυναῖκα κάμὲ καὶ τὰ δοῦλα φίλτατα.
Σὸς δοῦλος Ἀλέξιος Μακρεμβολίτης (15)
Τούτους, παναμώμητε, εἶπε τοὺς λόγους.

24. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 76-77 (*Esc. 166*). Probably this is Theodoros Mouzalon, who served as megas Droungarios under Andronikos II, see *PLP* 19437.

25. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 214-215 (*Flor. 41*); see *PLP* 16352.

Ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τοῦ βασιλέως, πρὸς τὸν μέγαν Δημήτριον.[26]

Εἰς τὰς λαμυρὰς τῶν μύρων σου προσχύσεις
Ἀφεὶς τὸ σεπτὸν καὶ διάχρυσον σκάφος,
Ὦ τὴν ψυχικὴν συγκομίζω φορτίδα
(Τὴν γὰρ ζάλην δέδοικα τῆς ἁμαρτίας),
Ἔχοιμί σε πρόμαχον ἐν τοῖς κινδύνοις,
Ὡς ἂν διελθὼν εὐμαρῶς μου τὸν βίον
Εἰς τὸν γαληνὸν τῶν ψυχῶν ὅρμον φθάσω.
Θεόδωρός σοι ταῦτα τῷ στεφανίτῃ
Παλαιολόγος σύγγονος βασιλέως
Κομνηνοφυὴς εὐσεβὴς ἀνακτόπαις.

Ἐκ προσώπου τοῦ μεγάλου Δρουγγαρίου εἰς τὸν τίμιον Πρόδρομον.[27]

Ἔχει μὲν ἡ θάλασσα τοῦ ῥευστοῦ βίου
Πολλὴν καθ' ἡμῶν καὶ σφριγῶσαν τὴν ζάλην
Κυκᾷ γὰρ αὐτὴν ἡ πνοὴ τῶν πραγμάτων
Ὡς ἀσχέτου λαίλαπος ἐμβριθεστέρα·
Σὺ δὲ ξένον ζέφυρον ἐλπίδων χέων
Σοφῶς κυβερνᾷς τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸ σκάφος,
Μήπως ὁ βυθὸς τῶν κακῶν τῶν ἐν μέσῳ
Αὔτανδρον αὐτὸ συγκαλύψῃ τῷ γνόφῳ.
Οὐκοῦν ἐπί σε τὸν κυβερνήτην βλέπων
Ἐφίσταμαι δὴ τῇ θαλαττίᾳ χύσει
Τὰς βασιλικὰς τεκτονεύων ὁλκάδας,
Ἃς οὐρίῳ πνεύματι καὶ πλησιστίῳ
Στόλον κατ' ἐχθρῶν εὐδραμοῦντα δεικνύοις·
Μετὰ δὲ τὴν ῥέουσαν ἐν βίῳ ζάλην
Εἰς ὅρμον ἡμᾶς πνευματικὸν ἰθύναις.
Ὁμώνυμός σοι ταῦτα Δούκας Μουζάλων,
Ὦ λύχνε φωτός, καὶ μέγας Δρουγγάριος.

26. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 161-162 (*Paris. 126*); Theodoros Palaiologos, the youngest son of Michael VIII; see *PLP* 21464.

27. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 187-188 (*Paris. 156*). John Doukas Mouzalon, megas Droungarios; see *PLP* 19440. Also *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 167-168 (*Paris. 132*) is dedicated to the megas Droungarios, but the dedicatee could also be Stephen Mouzalon, megas Droungarios *τοῦ πλωΐμου*; see *PLP* 19447.

The five epigrams above were commissioned to Philes by male donors for different reasons; *Esc. 162* and *166* are expressions of devotion to the Virgin for the benefits she has bestowed upon the speakers during their lives; *Paris. 126* and *156* are requests for protection addressed by powerful noblemen to their homonymous divine protectors, St Demetrios and St John the Baptist; but it is only in *Flor. 41* that the donor Alexios Makrembolites invokes protection for and recommends also his wife to the Virgin, so that she too may be written in the book of salvation. Such mention, however, is quite cursory and is squashed between the end of a rather long monologue in which Makrembolites stresses his devotion and his love (*πόθος*) for the Theotokos, while at the same time emphasises his special long standing connection with the Virgin; and the closing lines in which the donor's name stands out forcefully and the intimate relationship with his divine protectress is further accentuated by the possessive adjective *σὸς* in prominent position at the beginning of the verse. Therefore, notwithstanding the rare mention of his wife, also this epigram has a profound egocentric outlook that reinforces the exclusiveness of the bond between Alexios and the Virgin, a bond in which no one else can truly find space, as it is the case also in *Esc. 162* and *166*.

If, on the other hand, one considers epigrams commissioned by women, he can perceive a rather different tone; while male donors appear mainly concerned with their spiritual salvation and the safeguarding of their social status, female characters display a broader, more inclusive attitude, as the following compositions will show[28].

Ἐκ προσώπου τῆς Ῥαουλαίνης τῆς Κασιανῆς, εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς θεομήτορος.[29]

Τοὺς ἐντόμους λύσασα τῆς Εὔας πόνους, (1)
Καὶ συμπαθῶς τηροῦσα τοὺς ἐμοὺς τόκους,

28. On epigrams commissioned to Philes by women, see A.-M. TALBOT, Female Patronage in the Palaiologan Era: Icons, Minor Arts and Manuscripts, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. THEIS, M. MULLETT, M. GRÜNBART, G. FINGAROVA and M. SAVAGE [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 2011/12, 259-274, esp. 265-269 where some of the epigrams considered in this paper are also discussed.

29. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 72-73 (*Esc. 161*). Maria Kassiane is known only from these verses; see *PLP* 24143. On this epigram, see TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 153-154.

(Θεὸς γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ πλὴν φυσικῶν ὠδίνων),
Δέχου τὸ σῶστρον τοῦτο, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
Δι' ἧς ἔχω ζῶν καὶ παρ' ἐλπίδα πνέον
Τὸ παραμικρὸν ἀποθανόν μοι βρέφος.
Ζωὴ γὰρ εἶ σὺ καὶ τεραστίων χύσις
Τὴν ἰλὺν ἐκπλύνουσα τῆς ἁμαρτίας.
Κομνηνοφυὴς ἐκ Ῥαούλ σοι Μαρία
Κασιανὴ προσεῖπεν ὡς εὔνους τάδε.

"On behalf of Kassiane Raoulaina, to an icon of the Mother of God.
O thou who delivered Eve from her intense suffering
And dost sympathetically watch over my birth pangs
(For God <was born> of thee without the natural pain of childbirth),
Accept this thank-offering, holy Virgin,
Thou, through whom my infant child who all but died
Lives and breathes beyond <all> hope.
For thou art life and the source of miracles,
Washing away the mud of sin.
Maria Kassiane, the daughter of Raoul, of the lineage of the Komnenoi,
Has spoken these words to thee in gratitude"[30].

Εἰς τὴν ὑπέραγνον θεοτόκον ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς πρωτοστρατορίσσης.[31]

Εἰς τί μόνη, πάναγνε, παρθένος κύεις,
Τηρεῖς δὲ σαυτὴν καὶ τεκοῦσα παρθένον;
Ἢ τοῦτο πάντως, ὡς τὸ πᾶν σώσῃς γένος
Ζωῇ φθορὰν λύσασα καὶ τόκῳ λύπην.
Εἰ γοῦν τὸ σώσειν ἔργον ἐστί σοι μέγα,
Καὶ ταῦτα τὴν σύμπασαν ἀνθρώπων φύσιν,
Πῶς οὐ μόνην σώσεις με τὴν σὴν ἐξόχως,
Ἣν ἀπὸ γαστρὸς μητρικῆς δούλην ἄγεις;
Ἐν σοὶ γὰρ αὐτὴν καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ σαρκίον,
Καὶ πᾶν ὅ τι χρήσιμον ἐν βίῳ φέρω.
Καὶ σὺ μόνη σκέποις με σὺν τῷ συζύγῳ,

30. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 153.

31. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 74-75 (*Esc. 164*). Maria could possibly be identified as the wife of Michael protostrator; see *PLP* 16878 and 19002.

Τιθεῖσα καλὰς τῆς ψυχῆς τὰς ἐλπίδας·
Ὁ τύπος εἰκὼν τοῦ περὶ σέ μου πόθου.
Λοιπὸν σιωπῶ, τοῦτο γὰρ πρέπον τύποις.
Ἡ πρωτοστρατόρισσα ταῦτα Μαρία (15)
Πρὸς τὴν Μαριὰμ τὴν κεχαριτωμένην.

"To the all-pure Theotokos, on behalf of the protostratorissa.
Why is it that you alone, All-chaste one, being a virgin conceive,
And preserve your virginity even after giving birth?
Without doubt, this <happens> so that you may save the entire <human> race,
Destroying corruption with life and sorrow with childbirth.
Then, if salvation is your great work,
And this applies to all mankind,
How would you not save me alone, who am preeminently yours,
Whom you bring forth out of my mother womb as your servant?
For I myself am in you with both my sould and body,
And <from you> I receive everything that is beneficial in the <present> life.
May you alone protect me and my husband, implanting good hopes in my soul.
This image is a picture of my desire for you.
Now I shall remain silent; for this befits images.
The protostratorissa Maria <says> these <words> to Mariam full of Grace"[32].

Ἕτεροι ἐξ αὐτῆς εἰς τὴν ὑπεραγίαν θεοτόκον.[33]

Ἐχρῆν μὲν ἡμᾶς ἐξ ὑλῶν ὑπερτίμων (1)
Τὸν σόν, Μαριάμ, ζωγραφεῖν θεῖον τύπον
Τοὺς γὰρ τύπους λύσασα τοῦ πάλαι νόμου,
Καὶ τὰς ἀμυδρὰς καὶ σκιώδεις ἐμφάσεις,
Ὃ φασι γυμνὴν ἀντιδίδως τὴν χάριν. (5)
Ἀλλ' ἡ νοητὴ τῆς ψυχῆς σου φαιδρότης
Ὑλῶν ὁρατῶν ἐκνικᾷ πᾶσαν χάριν.
Πλὴν εἴπερ ἐξῆν ζωγραφεῖν κατὰ μέλος,

32. Engl. transl. by DRPIĆ, *Epigram, Art* (as in footnote 2), 379-380.
33. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 75-76 (*Esc. 165*).

Καὶ τὰς πρὸς ἡμᾶς δωρεὰς σὰς ἐνθάδε,
Χάριν ἂν εἶχον ταῖς γραφαῖς καὶ τοῖς τύποις. (10)
Νυνὶ δὲ νικᾷ καὶ τὸ τῆς τέχνης μέτρον
Ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἄφθονος χορηγία·
Σὺ γάρ με ποιεῖς δαψιλεῖ πλούτῳ βρύειν,
Ἀνδρί τε συνδεῖς εὐγενεῖ καὶ κοσμίῳ
Πρὸς τῇ σταθηρᾷ τῶν φρενῶν εὐταξίᾳ, (15)
Καὶ τεκνοποιεῖν εὐλογεῖς μοι τὸν γάμον,
Οἷς οἶδας αὐτὴ σὺν θεῷ πάντως τρόποις.
Ἐγὼ δέ σοι δίδωμι, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
Σῶμα, ψυχήν, ὕπαρξιν, αἴσθησιν, λόγον,
Καὶ πᾶν ὅπερ σύνεστιν ἢ πρόσεστί μοι. (20)
Σὲ γὰρ παρηγόρημα καρδίας ἔχω,
Καὶ πάσας ἐν σοὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τὰς ἐλπίδας
Ἔχω κινοῦσα κατὰ πάντα τὸν βίον.
Σὺ γοῦν μόνη σκέποις με σὺν τῷ συζύγῳ,
Σὺ καὶ συνάπτοις εἰς Ἐδὲμ θείους τόπους. (25)
Ἡ πρωτοστρατόρισσα ταῦτα Μαρία Κομνηνοφυὴς τῇ κεχαριτωμένῃ.

Ἐκ προσώπου τῆς τοῦ Πορφυρογεννήτου γυναικὸς
εἰς τὴν ὑπεραγίαν θεοτόκον ἐπὶ λυχνίᾳ.[34]

Εὐσπλαγχνίας ἔχουσα, παρθένε, ζέσιν (1)
Τὸ φωταγωγὸν εὐμενῶς δῶρον δέχου·
Τοῦ σοῦ δὲ φωτὸς ἀντιδίδου τὴν χύσιν
Τῷ πορφυρανθεῖ τῷ γλυκεῖ μου συζύγῳ,
Παθῶν ψυχικῶν ἐκδιώκουσα σκότος. (5)
Κομνηνοφυὴς ταῦτά σοι Θεοδώρα.

"On behalf of the wife of the Porphyrogennetos to the most holy Theotokos about a lamp.
O Virgin, since you have the warmth of compassion,
Graciously accept the lamp as a gift;
And grant in exchange to shed your light

34. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 154 (*Paris. 110*). Miller identified her with Theodora Komnene, wife of Michael VIII and mother of Andronikos II (*PLP* 21380), but she should be identified with Theodora Komnene, wife of the despot Demetrios Palaiologos; see *PLP* 12065.

On my sweet husband, blossoming from the purple,
Chasing out the darkness of his spiritual suffering,
Theodora, the scion of the Komnenoi, <addresses> these <words>
to Thee"[35].

The relevance that the emotional sphere, particularly in connection with child bearing and spouses, holds in these verses is apparent. In most of the above epigrams the speaking selves express their devotion to the Theotokos in a manner that is very close to that of their male counterparts: gratitude, longing (*πόθος*) and humility, play a prominent role in these verses too, but female supplicants tend to focus and expand their thankfulness particularly upon the blessing of a healthy husband, the safe delivery of children, and the avoidance of infertility, rather than just on their own wellbeing and their social position[36]. The women who commissioned these epigrams are central to these verses, nonetheless their appeals to the Virgin and Christ are not exclusive: their outlook is projected outward rather than inward and is undoubtedly more encompassing than that of their male equivalents. Maria Kassiane makes a votive offering to thank Mary for protecting and rescuing her infant child from almost certain death; the *protostratorissa* Maria Glabaina, who offers an icon to the Virgin for all the benefactions she has received, among which her noble husband, as well as the blessing of offspring stands out conspicuously[37]; a certain Theodora of Komnenian stock commissions verses to accompany the donation of a lamp to entreat the spiritual protection of the Theotokos; a lamp that, at the same time, is the perfect foil for Theodora's anguish and the darkness of passions from which her spouse has to be protected.

It is important to try to understand what lay behind this perceptible difference in emotional expression between male and female donors. Certainly, preoccupation about fertility, the birth of healthy children, and even a woman's survival in childbirth are all facets of the condition of Byzantine women, their main role within society, and the kind social pressure they had to endure. Yet, one can argue, there is more to it; the tendency to highlight these topics side by

35. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Female Patronage in the Palaiologan Era (as in footnote 28), 268.

36. See T. PAPAMASTORAKIS, Δωρεές γυναικών από τον 8ο στον 12ο αιώνα, in: *Η γυναίκα στο Βυζάντιο: Λατρεία και τέχνη*, ed. by M. PANAYOTIDI-KESISOGLOU, Athens 2012, 231-241 and S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Δωρεές γυναικών στην υστεροβυζαντινή περίοδο, in: *ibidem*, 231-256.

37. On this epigram, see DRPIĆ, *Epigram, Art* (as in footnote 2), 366-368.

side the ever so frequent pleas for personal salvation seems also an expression of what women cared about and was relevant to them, even though there is no way to establish to what extent the thoughts of these women have been mediated by the action and the words of the poet. There is no doubt that social expectation made fecundity and the delivery of fit offspring one of the greatest desiderata of the time; nevertheless, it would be wrong to consider the expressions of maternal love and these women's concern for the wellbeing of their children just a literary topos and not also an echo of the patroness' personal feelings. After all, as Ivan Drpić has persuasively argued, the dedicatory prayer, the object offered by the donor, as well as the divine figure to whom it was presented, all concurred to fashion the patron's "I"; so that, despite the general lack of factual details that characterises Byzantine epigrams, we can still detect numerous autobiographical and personal elements in these texts[38]; hence, we cannot discard all this simply as convention or creations of the poet. Equally, despite this more embracing attitude on the part of female patrons, female donors' awareness of the importance of social status must not at all be discounted: mention of their noble lineage and of their equally distinguished husbands becomes the conventional way by which these women establish and endorse their position within society[39].

The trend that sees patronesses avoid become the sole protagonists of the verses they commission by removing themselves from centre stage is very conspicuous in two other renowned poems by Philes composed at the behest of Maria-Martha Glabaina Tarchaneiotissa for the completion of the parekklesion of the Pammakaristos monastery (Fethiye Camii) in Constantinople; of these two epigrams, one is still partially visible *in situ*, while the other has been preserved in Philes' manuscripts[40].

---

38. *Ibidem*, 77-117; in particular 96-98.

39. *Ibidem*, 101-105.

40. On the Pammakaristos, see H. Belting, C. Mango and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul*, Washington, D.C. 1978; on the inscriptions decorating the Pammakaristos, see A. Papalexandrou, Text in Context: Eloquent Monuments and the Byzantine Beholder, *Word and Image* 17/3 (2001), 259-283; Talbot, Epigrams in Context (as in footnote 2), 76-79. See also W. Hörandner, A. Rhoby and A. Paul, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung*, [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschriften 474. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 35], Vienna 2014, vol. 1, 661-666. On Pammakaristos, see V. Kidonopoulos, *Bauten in Konstantinopel 1204-1328: Verfall und Zerstörung, Restaurierung, Umbau and Neubau von Profan- und Sakralbauten* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 1], Wiesbaden 1994, 80-86.

Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς τὸν ναὸν ὃν ᾠκοδόμησεν ἡ τοῦ πρωτοστράτορος σύμβιος, ἀποθανόντι τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς.[41]

Ἡ μὲν διὰ σοῦ πᾶσα τῶν ὄντων φύσις (1)
Οὐ δύναται χωρεῖν σε τὴν πρώτην φύσιν
Πληροῖς γὰρ αὐτήν, ἀλλὰ καὶ πλείων μένεις,
Θεοῦ Λόγε ζῶν, καὶ δρακὶ τὸ πᾶν φέρων,
Κἂν σὰρξ ἀληθὴς εὑρεθεὶς περιγράφῃ, (5)
Ψυχαῖς δὲ πισταῖς μυστικῶς ἐνιδρύῃ,
Μονὴν σεαυτῷ πηγνύων ἀθάνατον.
Οὐκοῦν δέχου τὸν οἶκον ὃν τέτευχά σοι
Δεικνύντα σαφῶς τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὴν σχέσιν·
Τὸν σύζυγον δὲ φεῦ τελευτήσαντά μοι (10)
Καὶ τῆς χοϊκῆς ἀπαναστάντα στέγης,
Οἴκισον εἰς ἄφθαρτον αὐτὸς παστάδα·
Κἀνταῦθα τηρῶν τὴν σορὸν τοῦ λειψάνου,
Μή τις ἐνεχθῇ συντριβὴ τοῖς ὀστέοις.
Πρωτοστράτορ, καὶ ταῦτα σὴν δήπου χάριν (15)
Ἡ σύζυγος πρίν, ἀλλὰ νῦν Μάρθα γράφει.

Ἐκ προσώπου τῆς πρωτοστρατορίσσης, εἰς τὸν κοσμήτην τοῦ ναοῦ ὃν ᾠκοδόμησεν ἐπὶ θανόντι τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς.[42]

Ἄνερ τὸ φῶς, τὸ πνεῦμα, τὸ πρόσφθεγμά μου· (1)
Καὶ τοῦτό σοι τὸ δῶρον ἐκ τῆς συζύγου.
Σὺ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἄγρυπνος ἐν μάχαις λέων
Ὑπνοῖς ὑπελθὼν ἀντὶ λόχμης τὸν τάφον.
Ἐγὼ δέ σοι τέτευχα πετραίαν στέγην, (5)
Μὴ πάλιν εὑρὼν ὁ στρατός σε συγχέῃ,
Κἂν δεῦρο τὸν χοῦν ἐκτινάξας ἐκρύβης,
Ἢ τοῦ πάχους ῥεύσαντος ἡρπάγης ἄνω,
Πᾶν ὅπλον ἀφεὶς ἐκκρεμὲς τῷ παττάλῳ.
Τὰς γὰρ ἐπὶ γῆς ἐβδελύξω παστάδας, (10)
Ἐν εὐτελεῖ τρίβωνι φυγὼν τὸν βίον,
Καὶ πρὸς νοητοὺς ἀντετάξω σατράπας
Στερρὰν μετενδὺς ἐκ θεοῦ παντευχίαν.

41. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 115-116 (*Esc. 219*). For Maria-Martha, see *PLP* 27511.
42. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 117-118 (*Esc. 223*).

Ὡς ὄστρεον γοῦν ὀργανῶ σοι τὸν τάφον
Ἢ κόχλον, ἢ κάλυκα κεντρώδους βάτου, (15)
Μάργαρέ μου, πορφύρα, γῆς ἄλλης ῥόδον
Εἰ καὶ τρυγηθὲν ἐκπιέσῃ τοῖς λίθοις,
Ὡς καὶ σταλαγμοὺς προξενεῖν μοι δακρύων·
Αὐτὸς δὲ καὶ ζῶν, καὶ θεὸν ζῶντα βλέπων,
Ὡς νοῦς καθαρὸς τῶν παθῶν τῶν ἐξ ὕλης, (20)
Τὸν σὸν πάλιν θάλαμον εὐτρέπισέ μοι.
Ἡ σύζυγος πρὶν ταῦτά σοι Μάρθα γράφει,
Πρωτοστράτορ κάλλιστε καὶ τεθαμμένων.

Both epigrams are in the form of laments pronounced by widow of the late Michael Glabas, who offers the lavishly decorated building in his honour and for his spiritual salvation. Although the completion of the building occurred under the sponsorship of the *protostratorissa* after the death of her husband[43], and Maria-Martha is the speaking voice in these compositions, she is not the predominant character; the protagonist of these verses, in fact, is the *protostrator* who, albeit dead and unnamed, is both praised as a brave general during his life, and invoked in his condition of spirit devoid of earthly passions –*νοῦς καθαρός*– to intercede for Maria's salvation into the next world. The function of Maria-Martha, who describes herself simply as *σύζυγος*, is only to offer the mausoleum to Christ as a pledge of deliverance for her spouse; despite being the actual donor and main agent of the epigrams, Maria-Martha overturns the situation and presents herself as the one in need of redemption.

Noticeable dissimilarities have emerged quite clearly from the poems examined so far, both in the manner in which women are addressed –Philes does not avoid irony or blunt requests, but does so in a gentler, less direct way– and the way in which female voices and personalities reach the reader even through the mediation of poetic art and the burden of social conventions. There is, however, one occurrence where female and male attitudes seem to tally; namely in those epigrams that convey particularly pressing requests, or that have been composed to accompany devotional gifts offered after miraculous recovery from physical ailments. In these cases one can notice that men and

43. See A. Effenberger, Zur Restaurierungstätigkeit des Michael Dukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes im Pammakaristoskloster und zur Erbauungszeit des Parekklesions, *Zograf* 31 (2006/7), 79-94.

women alike are firmly concentrated upon themselves, and that their attention swings only from the recollection of their past pain to the wonder for the healing miracles they have been granted by divine intervention; in these cases, there is no external interference that in any way distracts the donor from expressing their devotion to God.

Πρὸς τὴν θεομήτορα χαριστήριος.[44]

Ὁ σὸς μὲν υἱὸς θαυματουργῶν, παρθένε, (1)
Καὶ τῇ λογικῇ πρακτικὴν συνεισφέρων,
Ἄνικμον ἐψύχωσε χειρὸς ὀστέον,
Ῥήματος αὐτῷ ζωτικὴν δοὺς ἰκμάδα·
Καὶ γὰρ ἰατρὸς κοσμοσώστης εὑρέθη, (5)
Προπατορικῆς ἐκτεμὼν χειρὸς πάθος.
Σὺ δ', ὦ Μαριάμ, τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς δρόσε,
Τῆς σῆς με πηγῆς ταῖς ῥοαῖς ἀναψύχεις,
Καὶ τὸν πρὶν ἡμίξηρον ἐξ ἁμαρτίας
Χλωροῖς πάλιν, σώτειρα, κοσμεῖς ὀργάνοις, (10)
Καὶ τῶν ἰατρῶν τὴν σοφὴν ψῆφον λύεις
Τῇ πρὸς τὸ λυποῦν μυστικῇ χειρουργίᾳ.
Ῥάβδος γὰρ ἐν σοὶ γλυκερὸν θάλος φύει,
Καὶ πῦρ ὑπελθὸν οὐ καταφλέγει βάτον,
Καὶ ῥοῦς διαστάς, ὡς φυγὰς ὑποστρέφει. (15)
Χειρί σε λοιπὸν ζωγραφῶ σκιαγράφου,
Σμικρᾶς ἀμοιβῆς οὐ καταλλήλου χάριν.
Τείνω δέ σοι τὴν χεῖρα τὴν σεσωσμένην,
Ὁ χθὲς θανατῶν ἄρτι φανεὶς ἀρτίπους·
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ καὶ ψυχῆς λύσεις πόνους (20)
Παρειμένης πόῤῥωθεν ἐκ τῶν πρακτέων,
Εὐσπλαγχνίας ἄβυσσε καὶ τεραστίων.
Ὁ σὸς Μανουὴλ ταῦτά φησιν Ἀτζύμης,
Ὃν καὶ σεβαστὸν τὴν τιμὴν σὺ δεικνύεις.

"<A poem of> thanksgiving to the Mother of God.
O Virgin, thy Son, working miracles,

44. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 66-67 (*Esc. 156*). Manuel Atzumes is known only from this epigram; see *PLP* 1632. See TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 148-150.

And joining action with word,
Restored life to the dry bone of a hand,
Giving it the living moisture of his word.
For he has been revealed as a world-saving doctor,
Excising the affliction of the hand of our forefather
But thou, o Mary, dew of my soul,
Dost refresh me with the streams of thy spring,
And, o Mistress of Salvation, thou adornest again with fresh limbs
One who was formerly half-withered because of his sins,
And thou repealest the wise judgment of doctors
With thy mystical surgery on the painful <area>.
For in thee the rod brings forth a sweet shoot
And descending fire does not burn the bush,
And the waters divide, and turn back like a fugitive.
Therefore I paint thee with the hand of the icon-painter,
As an unsuitably small repayment.
And I extend to thee the hand which thou hast saved,
I, who only yesterday was on the point of death, but now am revealed sound limb;
For thou shalt also relieve the suffering of my soul,
Which has for long been paralyzed on account of its deeds,
O bottomless source of compassion and miracles.
Thy <servant> Manuel Atzymes says these words,
Whom thou revealest with the dignity of sebastos"[45].

Χαριστήριος τῇ θεοτόκῳ ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ Συρστέφνου γυναικός.[46]

Μόνη γυναικῶν τὸν θεὸν φέρεις βρέφος· (1)
Μόνη γυναικῶν παρθενεύεις ἐν τόκῳ·
Μόνη γυναικῶν τὸ βροτῶν σώσεις γένος·
Τῆς φύσεως γὰρ ἐξαμείβεις τοὺς νόμους,
Καὶ τήνδε τὴν γυναῖκα θανοῦσαν τέως (5)
Τῷ πᾶσαν αὐτῆς ἐκκενωθῆναι φλέβα,

45. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 148-149.

46. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 73-74 (*Esc. 163*). According to *PLP* 27230 *σὺρ Στέφανος* would be a better reading for *Συρστέφνου*. On this epigram, see TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 150-152.

Μόνῃ γυναικῶν ἐξανιστάνεις πάλιν,
Καὶ τῶν ἰατρῶν ἐξελέγχεις τὴν κρίσιν.
Ἣν γὰρ ὑπεξίκμασεν ἡ νόσος φύσιν,
Τῇ σῇ δρόσῳ θάλλουσαν αὐτὴ δεικνύεις. (10)
Θεὸς μὲν οὖν ἔπληξε τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους,
Μεταβαλὼν εἰς αἷμα πᾶν ὕδωρ πάλαι·
Τῆς σῆς δὲ πηγῆς, Μαριάμ, τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ
Αἵματος ἰσχὺν προσβαλὸν τῷ λειψάνῳ
Σωτηρίαν ἤνεγκεν ἐξ ἀντιστρόφου. (15)
Καὶ γὰρ καθαιρεῖ τὰς νομὰς τῶν τραυμάτων,
Καὶ τῶν ὀδυνῶν τὴν πυρὰν καταψύχει,
Κἂν ὑδεριᾷ δυσπαθῶς τὸ σαρκίον,
Τὸ τοῦ πάθους οἴδημα συστέλλει ζέον·
Κἂν ἰσχνὸν εὕρῃ σῶμα καὶ μόλις πνέον, (20)
Εἰς θρύψιν αὐτὸ καὶ χλιδὴν εὔχρουν τρέπει.
Τοιαῦτά σοι τὰ δῶρα, σεμνὴ παρθένε,
Πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα τήνδε τὴν σὴν ἱκέτιν,
Ἣν καὶ ψυχικῆς ἐξαναστήσαις νόσου,
Τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ χέασα τῆς ἀφθαρσίας. (25)

<A poem of> thanksgiving to the Mother of God on behalf of the wife of Syrstephnos.
Thou alone amongst women dost bear God as an infant,
Thoul alone amongst women dost remain a virgin while giving birth,
Thou alone amongst women dost save the race of mortals;
For thou dost alter the laws of nature,
And this woman who was for a time on the verge of death
As a result of the emptying out of all her veins,
Thou alone amongst women dost revive her once more,
And dost refute the judgment of doctors.
For the nature which the disease dessicated
Thou dost show to be flourishing as a result of thy dew.
God smote the Egyptians,
Changing all the water into blood long ago;
But Mary, the living water of thy spring,
Offering the strength of bloody to her lifeless body,
Hath conversely brought salvation.
For it relieves the infection of wounds,

And cools the burning fire of pain;
Even if the flesh suffers terribly from dropsy,
It checks the seething swelling of the disease.
And if it finds a withered body that is scarcely breathing,
It turns it to softness and luxuriant health.
Such are thy gifts, holy Virgin,
To this woman thy suppliant;
Mayest thou revive her from spiritual illness as well,
Pouring <over her> the living water of immortality[47].

Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου ἐκ προσώπου τῆς Παλαιολογίνης.[48]

Ἐγὼ πρὸ θηλῆς μητρικῆς καὶ σπαργάνων, (1)
Ἐγὼ πρὸ φωτὸς καὶ πνοῆς, ὦ παρθένε,
Τροφόν σε καὶ φῶς καὶ πνοὴν ἔσχον μόνην,
Καὶ προστάτιν ἄγρυπνον εἰς τὸν δεσπότην.
Ἡ μὲν γὰρ εὐπαθής τε καὶ ῥευστὴ φύσις (5)
Συχνὰς ἐμοὶ προὔθηκεν εὐθὺς τὰς νόσους,
Ὡς καὶ θανατᾶν καὶ τελευτᾶν ἔσθ' ὅτε·
Σὺ δὲ ψυχὴν εὔρωστον ἠγγυωμένη,
Τὸν σωματικὸν ἀνελάμβανες τόνον,
Τὰς τῶν ἰατρῶν ἐξελέγχουσα κρίσεις. (10)
Ἔτι δὲ καὶ νῦν τοὺς ἐμοὺς λύεις πόνους,
Τῶν θαυμάτων κιρνῶσα τὰς ἀντιδότους.
Οὐκοῦν δέχου τὸ σῶστρον ἐκ χρυσαργύρου,
Δέχου δὲ καὶ τὸν ἔνδον ἀῤῥήτως πόθον·
Οἶδας γὰρ ὡς ἔγωγε σὴν δήπου χάριν, (15)
Ἀφεῖσα τὸν πρὶν τῆς κενῆς δόξης τύφον,
Ὡς εὐτελὲς τὸ ῥάκος ἠμφιασάμην,
Ἄνανδρος εἰς σύζευξιν εὐελπιστίας.
Ἐξ Εὐλογίας ταῦτα σεμνή σοι κόρη
Κομνηνοφυοῦς τῆς Παλαιολογίνης, (20)
Στρατοπεδάρχου τοῦ μεγάλου φιλτάτης,
Ἀδελφιδῆς ἄνακτος εὐσεβεστάτου.

47. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 151.

48. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 77-78 (*Esc. 168*). Eulogia Palaiologina was a niece of Andronikos II and daughter of a stratopedarch; see *PLP* 21370.

On the icon of the most holy Theotokos, on behalf of the Palaiologina.
O virgin, even before I <experienced> my mother's breast and swaddling clothes,
Even before I saw the light and drew breath,
I had Thou alone as my nurse and light and breath,
And as a vigilant protectress with my Lord.
For my ephemeral nature, easily susceptible <to disease>
Straightaway afflicted me with frequent illnesses,
So that sometimes I was on the point of death and ending my life;
But Thou, Who art guarantor of a healthy soul,
Restored the vitality of my body,
Refuting the judgment of the physicians.
And now again Thou deliverest me from my pains,
Concocting the antidotes of Thy miracles.
Therefore accept the thank-offering of silver gilt,
Receive also the love that lies ineffably within it.
For Thou knowest, as I do, Thy grace,
When unmarried, having renounced vanity before vainglory,
Donned the shabby monastic garment,
For a marriage of good hopes.
These verses <are addressed> to Thee, o venerable Maiden,
By Eulogia Palaiologina, of Komnenian stock,
Dearest <child> of the great stratopedarches,
Niece of the most pious emperor[49].

Εἰς εἰκόνα τῆς θεομήτορος.[50]

Τῆς μητρὸς ἀμείψασα τὴν ἀτεκνίαν, (1)
Καὶ τοῦ γένους λύσασα τὴν ἀκαρπίαν,
Καὶ τὸν θεὸν τεκοῦσα, παρθένε, βρέφος,
Νῦν τὴν ἐμὴν στείρωσιν εὐσπλάγχνως λύοις,
Ὡς ἄν ὁ καινὸς τοῦ θεανθρώπου τόκος (5)
Ἐγκωμιαστὴν καὶ παρ' ἡμῶν λαμβάνοι,

49. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Female Patronage in the Palaiologan Era (as in footnote 28), 266.

50. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, I, 319 (*Flor. 128*). Possibly to be identified with Theodora Philanthropene, wife of the pinkernes and doux Alexios Philanthropenos; see *PLP* 29743 and 29752.

Σεσωσμένον καὶ τοῦτον ὡς τὸ πᾶν γένος.
Φιλανθρωπηνὴ ταῦτα σὴ λάτρις γράφει.

Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς ἔπιπλον τῇ θεομήτορι.[51]

Τὸ τῆς κεφαλῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἄλγος, κόρη, (1)
Τοῖς τῶν ἰατρῶν ἀντιπίπτον φαρμάκοις
Ἡ σὴ καθαιρεῖ κοσμοσώτειρα δρόσος·
Τοῦ θαύματος δὲ προγράφεις μοι τὸν τύπον
Ὀφθεῖσα νυκτὸς καὶ καταστράψασά με. (5)
Χριστὸς γὰρ αὐτός, ἡ κεφαλὴ τῶν ὅλων,
Ἀνεῖλεν ἐν σοὶ τὰς σκιὰς καὶ τὰς νόσους.
Ἀμείβομαι γοῦν τὴν κορυφαίαν χάριν
Τῷ νῦν ὑφαντῷ τῆς γραφῆς σου κρασπέδῳ·
Καὶ σὺ πάλιν δρόσιζε τῇ σῇ με σκέπῃ, (10)
Καὶ παραμυθοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τοὺς πόνους.
Ὡς ἐξ Εἰρήνης ταῦτα τῆς ἀρχοντίσσης.

Epigram on an "epiplon" for the Mother of God.
Thy world-saving dew relieves,
O maiden, the pain in my head,
Which resisted the drugs of physicians.
Appearing in a vision at night and bedazzling me,
Thou didst prefigure the representation of the miracle.
For Christ himself, the head of all,
Through thee has eliminated shadows and diseases.
Therefore I repay now thy crowning grace
With a woven fabric of thy picture,
Besprinkle me again with thy protection,
And comfort the anguish of my soul.
These words are as if by Eirene the archontissa[52].

In the above epigrams the both male and female donors are actively engaged in a close and intimate monologue with their divine protectors, and have no

51. *Manuelis Philae Carmina*, II, 233 (*Paris. 220*). Nothing is known about the archontissa Eirene except for these verses; see *PLP* 5968. On this epigram, see also TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 154-156.

52. Engl. transl. by TALBOT, Epigrams of Manuel Philes on the Theotokos tes Peges (as in footnote 2), 155.

other concern but to express their gratitude and their relief. The suppliants are also equally eager to stress their unique affinity with their divine interlocutors by presenting themselves as the protagonists of an enduring rapport that traces its roots in infancy, as it happens in *Esc. 168*. The only tenuous connection to the external world present in these epigrams is the passing and scathing mention of doctors and of their inadequate remedies, which Christ and the Virgin have unfailingly proven wrong and inadequate.

It is now time to draw some conclusions on the way Philes relates to his male and female patrons, and how he conveys their voices and experiences. Although this investigation is by no means complete, it is possible to single out some differences in the poet's *modus operandi*. In his petitions to female patrons, Philes usually seems to modulate the forcefulness of his pleas and to make lesser use of sarcasm and direct blunt requests; a detail that, however, does not hinder him from complaining and being defiant, as we have seen in the epigram addressed to the empress for the suspension of fiscal benefits. In devotional epigrams composed at the behest of donors Philes always attunes his verses carefully to the occasion, but the manner he portrays his donors changes and adjusts in relation to their gender. Although male and female patrons display the same level of pious devotion, humbleness and fervent love of God, their outlook and connection to the outside world is visibly different. Men appear focused upon themselves, their good fortune and their social position; while women are always mindful of the wellbeing of their nearest and dearest, that they hope, may benefit from the same divine protection they enjoy. It is impossible to ascertain the motive for these differences, and we need always to keep in mind the reality that these verses were composed by a male poet, therefore we cannot know how accurately these epigrams reflect the genuine feelings of female patrons, how much is down to convention and to the desire to project a particular image of their 'devotional self', as Ivan Dripć defined it[53]. Even so, it seems unquestionable that Philes is able and willing to reach out to each of his patronesses individually, to attune his verses to their specific desires, and to connect to their sensibility in a way that brings to the fore some of these women's deepest preoccupations and most intimate thoughts, and, at the same time, reflects their condition. And this is certainly a further testimony of Philes' poetic talent.

53. Drpić, *Epigram, Art* (as in footnote 2), 108-117.

Appendix
Epigrams printed and discussed in the text

1. **To the emperor** (*Paris. 200*): when spring comes God adorns the earth with a new vestment of grass; the ruler instead neglects Philes, who considers himself the humblest among the emperor's subjects, and wonders how a Christ-loving, philonthropic nature can act so.
2. **To the empress when she withdraws his pronoia** (*Esc. 199*): the poet, who is miserable and famished, begs the most generous empress for forgiveness as he dares write to her for help.
3. **To one of the friends** (*Paris. 106*): the generous recipient of the epigram is reminded of his promise to donate wine to the poet, so as to revive his despondent heart.
4. **To (the metropolitan?) of Kyzikos** (*Flor. 235*): the poet complains that, while wine was abundant in Kyzikos, it is now scarce in Byzantium; therefore, he urges his friend to give him new wine.
5. **To the niece of the emperor, Syrgiannina, for the wine** (*Esc. 233*): the poet requests sweet wine from Syrgiannina, who is described as a helper of the poor and gifted with unwavering graces.
6. **To the all-pure Mother of God** (*Esc. 162*): Manuel Bardales can not be satiated by the blessings he receives from the Virgin; therefore, he dedicates a thank-offering in gold and silver, so as to request Mary to sustain the copious flow of miracles.
7. **On an icon on behalf of Mouzalon** (*Esc. 166*): Mouzalon claims the Virgin as his shelter since infancy; she has deemed him worthy of many miracles: she washes away his soul's unpleasant passions and squashes the fear of diseases, while protecting his devotee with the strenght of her right hand. Mouzalon can not repay the protection of the Virgin, but beseeches that she continue to enrich him freely with her gifts.
8. **On an icon of the Mother of God** (*Flor. 41*): since infancy Alexios Makrembolites has hold the Mother of God as his protectress in his heart; now he has her likeness depicted in order to see her living image. He has the icon adorned with radiant gold and silver and reveals his soul's love for the Mother of God. Finally, Alexios asks the Virgin to write him in the book of salvation together with his wife and servants.

9. **On behalf of the brother of the emperor to Saint Demetrios** (*Paris. 126*): Theodoros Palaiologos has entrusted the vessel of his life to the outpouring of the saint's *myron* for fear of the storm of sins. With the saint as his champion in the midst of dangers, the noble donor will reach the calm haven of the souls.
10. **On behalf of the megas Droungarios to the honourable Prodromos** (*Paris. 156*): although the sea of life is stormy and the blast of events blows heavier than a hurricane, St John steers the vessel of the soul of John Doukas Mouzalon, lest it be covered by darkness. With the Prodromos as his steersman he stands against the journey, and after the storm the saint will direct him to the spiritual haven.
11. **On behalf of Kassiane Roulaina on an icon of the Mother of God** (*Esc. 161*): Kassiane offers thanks to the holy Virgin as she has watched over her during childbirth, and has saved her new-born baby from certain death beyond all hope.
12. **To the all-pure Theotokos on behalf of the *protostratorissa*** (*Esc. 164*): Mary, who has conceived and preserved her virginity in order to destroy corruption and save human kind, cannot but save also the *Protostratorissa*, who belongs to the Virgin since birth and has received everything beneficial in life from her. Maria begs the Theotokos to protect her and her husband, and offers an icon as a token of her love and devotion.
13. **Other (verses) from the same (the *protostratorissa*) to the all-pure Theotokos** (*Esc. 165*): the *protostratorissa* claims that one should depict the holy Virgin with most precious materials, since she has dissolved the old law and has given unveiled grace to humankind; but Mary's spiritual splendour surpasses all costly materials, and no painting is capable to express properly the *protostratorissa*'s gratitude for all the gift bestowed upon her: wealth, a noble husband and offspring. Maria can only give herself as a thank-offering, place all her hope in Mary and ask for the Virgin's protection for her and her husband now, and in the life to come.
14. **On behalf of the wife of the Porphyrogennetos to the most holy Theotokos about a lamp** (*Paris. 110*): Theodora Komnene offers a lamp to the Virgin as a gift; in exchange she invokes her divine protection to dispel the spiritual suffering of her husband.
15. **Epigram on the chapel that the wife of the *protostrator* built after the death of her husband** (*Esc. 219*): the whole creation can not contain the

living Logos of God, who carries everything in his hand, even though he is bound by flesh. Maria-Martha begs Christ to accept the building that she has erected for him and that shows the affection of her soul; she entreats for her late husband who has abandoned earthly life that he may reside in the uncorruptible abode, protected from disturbance in his coffin.

16. **On behalf of the *protostratorissa* on the decoration of the chapel that she built for her dead husband** (*Esc. 223*): Maria addresses her late husband, a valiant commander her light and breath of life, and offers him the chapel she had erected lest anyone may disturb his eternal rest. Having become a nun Maria-Martha now rejects wordly life and wears God's strong armour; she has built the chapel as a precious oyster shell for her husband, the pearl of her life, who, although pressed by stones, is living and beholding God. As the *protostrator* is free from material passions, Maria pleads that he may prepare his eternal chamber for her too.
17. **(A poem) of thanksgiving to the Mother of God** (*Esc. 163*): Christ, joining action with word, has restored life to Manuel Atzymes' withered hand; Mary, who is the dew of his soul and has repealed the judgment of doctors, has adorned him with fresh limbs by means of her mystical surgery. As a small token of his gratitude Manuel offers an icon to the Virgin and extends her the hand she has saved, so that she may soothe the pains of his soul, which has been long paralysed by his actions.
18. **(A poem) of thanksgiving to the Mother of God on behalf of the wife of Syrstephanos** (*Esc. 163*): Mary alone among all women has conceived and mantained her virginity while giving birth, for she alone is capable to alter the laws of nature; likewise, she alone has reversed the prognosis of doctors and saved the wife of Syrstephanos from dropsy with the living water of her miraculous spring. The woman pleads with the Virgin to be revived also from spiritual illness.
19. **On the icon of the most holy Theotokos on behalf of the Palaiologina** (*Esc. 168*): the Mother of God has been the protectress of Eulogia Palaiologina since infancy, even before she saw the light; although her nature was prone to illness, Mary has always restored the health of her body, thus refuting the verdict of doctors. Therefore Eulogia, who has renounced to the world and has donned the monastic robe, offers a thank-offering of silver gilt as a token of her love for the Theotokos.
20. **On an icon of the Mother of God** (*Flor. 128*): Philanthropene begs the Virgin, who has altered the barrenness of Eve and has given birth to God,

to release her from infertility, so that her new infant may become a praise for the Virgin, having been saved like the whole humankind.

21. **Epigram on an *epiplon* (cloth) for the Mother of God** (*Paris. 220*): the miraculous dew of the Virgin has relieved Eirene's headache, which doctors could not healed. As a token of her gratitude the *archontissa* offers a woven cloth with the image of the Virgin, and begs that she continue to protect her and to soothe her spiritual anguish.

Anna Sklaveniti*

Women in Nikephoros Gregoras' Works: Love Stories, Politics, Literacy and Social Conventions

A large part of Nikephoros Gregoras' work refers to education and society of his time; within this framework references to and comments on women could not be omitted. The polymath Gregoras (*ca.* 1296-1358) speaks about women-scholars of his time, but also about other cases of women, by providing aspects of their presence in the turbulent society of the fourteenth century[1]. When studying the known works of Gregoras, we come across information on women who played important roles and influenced, either with their charm, or with their education, the political and social environment of the time. Most of the information on the subject is contained primarily in his *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία*, as might be expected, because of the extent of the text, whereas analogous information in his

* External Collaborator of the Institute of Historical Research/ The National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens, Greece.

1. Studies concerning women's life in the Palaiologan period have mainly focused either on dowry, or on female monasticism. For the social status of women during the Palaiologan period, see, among others, A. Laiou, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992; R. Macrides, Dowry and Inheritance in the Late Period: Some Cases from the Patriarchal Register, in: *Eherecht und Familiengut in Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. by D. Simon, Munich 1992, 89-98 (= Eadem, *Kinship and Justice in Byzantium, 11th-15th Centuries* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 1999, V); on gender segregation in the imperial court this period, see Fr. Schrijver, The Court of Women in Early Palaiologan Byzantium (*ca.* 1260-1350), *BMGS* 42/2 (2018), 219-236. Especially for female monasticism, see for instance A.-M. Talbot, Women's Space in Byzantine Monasteries, *DOP* 52 (1998), 113-127 (= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, XV). E. Mitsiou, Late Byzantine Female Monasticism from the Point of the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in: *The Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. An Essential Source for the History and Church of Late Byzantium*, ed. by Chr. Gastgeber, E. Mitsiou and J. Preiser-Kapeller [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 457. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 32], Vienna 2013, 161-173.

preserved correspondence is considerably less. The historian sometimes alludes to and occasionally comments on charming women who were entangled in fatal love affairs with personages that played important roles in the political and social life of his time. In other cases he speaks with admiration about women scholars, whom he held in high esteem, since he was a "man of letters" himself[2]. Also, he does not omit to mention an anonymous woman, who impressed him with her moral superiority.

I. Love and political ambitions

In the second chapter of his *Ῥωμαϊκὴ Ἱστορία*, Gregoras refers to the death of John III Vatatzes' wife, Eirene Laskarina. Throughout her lifetime, the empress participated with her husband in the prudent governance of the Empire of Nicaea and in the foundation of several beautiful churches, as well as charitable institutions[3]. However, Eirene died in 1241 and, unable to endure the loneliness, *μόνωσις*, as Gregoras says characteristically, Vatatzes married Constance-Anna, sister of the king of Sicily Manfred von Hohenstaufen in 1244; at the time she got married she was very young. The young queen had with her as her lady in waiting an extremely charming woman, Marchesina. In a "spicy" way, Gregoras describes that Marchesina with her delicate character, as well as with magic potions, charmed Vatatzes to such a degree that she made him her captive:

> "She was followed from those parts, among many others, by a woman who was her lady in waiting, who had a pretty face and a lust in her eyes, from which no one could escape. Her name was Marchesina and with her potions and her love spells, as well as with her refined character within a short time captivated the emperor's glance and made him burn for her love"[4].

---

2. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἱστορία* (ed. L. SCHOPEN, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1829-1855 = Gregoras, *Roman History*), vol. I, 340.15-16: *οἱ τῆς ἡσυχίας καὶ τῶν λόγων μανιώδεις καὶ λελυττηκότες ἔρωτες ἠβῶσιν ἔτι παρ' ἐμοί* (my underlining).

3. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 44.12-17: *ἦσαν γε μὴν ἄμφω τὴν βασιλείαν ἰθύνοντες πάνυ σεμνῶς καὶ κοσμίως καὶ πλείστην ποιούμενοι πρόνοιαν τοῦ δικαιοσύνην τε καὶ εὐνομίαν ἀνθεῖν ἐν ταῖς πόλεσιν, πλεονεξίαν τε ἀπεῖναι καὶ ἁρπαγήν. Ἐδείμαντο δὲ καὶ ναοὺς ἀμφότεροι λίαν περικαλλεῖς.*

4. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 45.9-14: *Εἵπετο δ' ἐκεῖθεν αὐτῇ καθάπερ τροφὸς καὶ παιδαγωγὸς ξὺν πολλαῖς ἄλλαις καὶ γυνή τις ὥραν ἐπαγομένη προσώπου καὶ ὀφθαλμῶν ὡς εἰπεῖν ἄφυκτόν τινα σαγήνην ὄνομα Μαρκεσίνα· ἣ φίλτροις καὶ καταδέσμοις ἐρωτικοῖς καὶ ἠθῶν*

Vatatzes from the very beginning neglected his new wife and devoted his whole attention to Marchesina (vol. I, 45.4-22). In contrast to other sources, which we will discuss below, the historian Gregoras seems to "exculpate" Vatatzes from his infidelity, since he categorically states that the emperor suffered from terrible guilt for his moral deviation:

> "However, because the emperor happened to be prudent, he did not conduct his life without sadness and without the appropriate distress and devastation, but was constantly pierced by his conscience like a sharp sting and he was waiting for the right moment to repent and implored God for deliverance from his moral deviation"[5].

This deliverance Vatatzes was asking from God for his moral deviation (*παρατροπή*), was given, according to Gregoras, by Nikephoros Blemmydes. The historian says that Blemmydes was a pious man, but also an intellectual, versed in Christian culture, as well as in secular learning. He made a drastic move: he dared to forbid Marchesina's entry into the monastery[6] where he was abbot, when she arrived escorted by courtiers, in order to attend holy service. Vatatzes' passion for Marchesina was such, that the "honorable mistress" was accompanied and guarded by officials of the court[7]. According to Gregoras'

ἀστειότητι κατὰ μικρὸν ὑπηγάγετο καὶ τοὺς βασιλικοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἑαυτῆς κατέκαυσεν ἔρωτας (my underlining). Concerning people's faith in magic "bands" as a way of controlling people, see PH. KOUKOULES, Μεσαιωνικοὶ καὶ Νεοελληνικοὶ κατάδεσμοι, *Λαογραφία* 8 (1921-1925), 302-346 and *Λαογραφία* 9 (1926-1928), 52-108. Objects used for magic are found throughout centuries, as in the example from Corinth, cf. M. LEONTSINI and A. PANOPOULOU, «Μαγικά» και αποτροπαϊκά τεκμήρια από τη βυζαντινή Κόρινθο. Συμβολικές χρήσεις και συλλογικές συμπεριφορές, in: *Ἀντικήνσωρ. Τιμητικός τόμος Σπύρου Ν. Τρωιάνου για τα ογδοηκοστά γενέθλιά του*, ed. by V. A. LEONTARITOU, C. A. BOURDARA and E. SP. PAPAGIANNI, Athens 2013, 855-877. As for Magic in the Palaiologan Period, see R. GREENFIELD, A Contribution to the Study of Palaeologan Magic, in: *Byzantine Magic*, ed. by H. MAGUIRE, Washington, D.C. 1995, 117-153.

5. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 45.22-46.2: *Ὅμως συνετός γε τυγχάνων ὁ βασιλεύς, οὐκ ἄλυπος τὸ παράπαν τὸν βίον διέβοσκεν, οὐδὲ κατηφείας καὶ συντριβῆς τῆς προσηκούσης ἐκτός. ἀλλὰ νύττουσαν εἶχε καθάπερ τι κέντρον ὀξὺ τὴν συνείδησιν, καὶ καιρὸν ἀνέμενε μετανοίας καὶ λύσιν ἐζήτει θεόθεν τῆς τοιαύτης παρατροπῆς* (my underlining).

6. Probably the monastery of Saint Gregory Thaumaturgos in Ephesus, see. R. JANIN, *Les églises et les monastères des grands centres byzantins (Bithynie, Hellespont, Latros, Galèsios, Trébizonde, Athènes, Thessalonique)*, Paris 1975, 245, note 1.

7. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 46.3-18. Blemmydes in his letter entitled «Letter to many people» describes in every detail the facts concerning Marchesina's entry in

report of the events, Marchesina was infuriated by Blemmydes' attitude and sought refuge with the emperor. But Vatatzes took a deep sigh, shed a tear, and refused to punish the guardian of morality Blemmydes, admitting that he was the one being punished for his evil deeds[8].

It is beyond doubt that Gregoras was exculpating Vatatzes at this point. Perhaps the historian's view of the events is part of the general policy of praising the policy of the Laskarids and of promoting John III's sanctification, which had been attempted immediately after his death[9], but also much later with the composition of one *Vita* implying this emperor, that of the anonymous Emperor[10]. Gregoras' effort to exonerate Vatatzes becomes evident if we compare Blemmydes' version of the episode in his work with the highly pompous, as well as concise title summarized as follows: *Ἐπιστολὴ καθολικωτέρα καὶ πρὸς πολλούς*[11]. It is thus useful to examine the way in which Blemmydes approaches

---

the monastery, while the congregation was attending the holy service, see Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Ἐπιστολὴ καθολικωτέρα καὶ πρὸς πολλούς* ... (ed. J. A. MUNITIZ, *Nicephori Blemmydae Autobiographia sive Curriculum Vitae necnon Epistula Universalior. Nicephori Blemmydae Opera* [CCSG 13], Turnhout 1984, 91-94 (= MUNITIZ, *Autobiographia*). See also R. MACRIDES, *George Akropolites, The History. Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Oxford U. P. 2007, 49.

8. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 47.4-12: *Ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἔνδακρυς γενόμενος καὶ βύθιόν τι στενάξας καὶ πάσης μεστὸς κατηφείας καὶ κατανύξεως ἐν βραχεῖ καταστὰς «ἵνα τί με κολάζειν ἄνδρα δίκαιον συνωθεῖτε; .... νῦν δὲ τὰς αἰτίας τῶν ἐμῶν ὕβρεων καὶ τῆς βασιλείας αὐτῆς αὐτὸς παρεχόμενος, προσηκούσας ἀπολαμβάνω λοιπὸν ἐντεῦθεν τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ τῶν πονηρῶν σπερμάτων ἄξια τὰ γεώργια»*.

9. P. GOUNARIDIS, *Τὸ Κίνημα τῶν Ἀρσενιατῶν (1261-1310). Ἰδεολογικὲς Διαμάχες τὴν ἐποχὴ τῶν πρώτων Παλαιολόγων*, Athens 1999, 51-52. Concerning Vatatzes' canonization, see D. I. POLEMIS, The Speech of Constantine Akropolites on St. John Merciful the Young, *AB* 91-92 (1973), 31-54, esp. 31-38. See also J. S. LANGDON, *John III Ducas Vatatzes' Byzantine Imperium in Anatolian Exile 1222-54: The Legacy of his Diplomatic, Military and Internal Program for the Restitutio Orbis*, PhD., Ann Arbor, Univ. of California 1978, Los Angeles 1979, 104-109, 169-173.

10. The anonymous writer composed the *Vita* of St John the King around 1448, using as a model an oration dedicated to emperor John III Vatatzes (1221-1254): *Βίος τοῦ ἁγίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Βασιλέως τοῦ Ἐλεήμονος*, ed. N. FESTA, À propos d'une biographie de St. Jean le Miséricordieux, *VV* 13 (1907), 1-35, esp. 18. For the context of this sermon, see *ibidem*, 23-35.

11. MUNITIZ, *Autobiographia*, 91-94. See also IDEM, A Wicked Woman in the 13th Century, *JÖB* 32/2, 529-537. On Nikephoros Blemmydes, see P. A. AGAPITOS, Blemmydes, Laskaris and Philes, in: *Byzantinische Sprachkunst. Studien zur byzantinischen Literatur gewidmet Wolfram Hörandner zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by M. HINTERBERGER and E. SCHIFFER

the events in his text, which seems to have had several addressees, as indicated in the title, since it appears that Gregoras used the words of the scholarly monk to give his own interpretation. Blemmydes overtly shows from the outset his hostile attitude towards Marchesina, by using harsh characterizations for the woman who entered with abundant arrogance like a vehement torrent into the church, naming her *τῆς οἰκουμένης τὸ πρόσκομμα, τὸ παγκόσμιον σκάνδαλον*[12].

> "Uncontrollable and unbridled the maenad came into our holy church, accompanied by a great and powerful cohort, just like a vehement torrent that carries away everything"[13].

Continuing with the same strict style, Blemmydes calls Marchesina *ἀσχήμονα, ἐκτόπως τοῖς νόμοις τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐνυβρίζουσαν καὶ τὴν ὕβριν δημοσιεύουσαν*[14], whereas his letter ends with his decision to drive away the unholy woman from the house of God and not to leave a woman who had rolled in the mud of adultery to stain the holy service[15]. Blemmydes' strict attitude towards Marchesina had triggered the authorities' wrath against him. In his two autobiographic texts, Blemmydes narrated the events with more details, emphasizing that one courtier in the entourage of Marchesina named Drimys was enraged with him and that he attempted to murder him[16]. In fact, the emperor tried to bribe him by sending him gold, which Blemmydes refused[17]. Lastly, Blemmydes points out

---

[Byzantinisches Archiv 20], Berlin–New York 2007, 6-19. Also, I. GIARENIS, *Η συγκρότηση και η εδραίωση της αυτοκρατορίας της Νίκαιας* [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. Monographs 12], Athens 2008, 286-287.

12. MUNITIZ, *Autobiographia*, 91.7-8. Blemmydes probably derives the phrase *παγκόσμιον σκάνδαλον* verbatim from Anastasius Sinaites work: *Τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀναστασίου πρεσβυτέρου καὶ μοναχοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου ὄρους Σινᾶ καὶ ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἀντιοχείας εἰς τὴν πνευματικὴν ἀναγωγὴν τῆς ἑξαημέρου κτίσεως λόγοι* (ed. J. BAGGARLY and C. KUEHN, *Anastasius of Sinai, Hexaemeron*, Rome 2007), 438, 797-800, who used the phrase exactly in the same way. Nevertheless, according to J. A. MUNITIZ (*Theognosti Thesaurus*, Leiden 1979, 11-12) Blemmydes' text has a lot in common with Theognostus' "Thesaurus"; see *ibidem*, chapter II, 113 ff.: *Τί ἐστι γυνή; Ἄγκιστρον διαβόλου, παγὶς καὶ δίκτυον, δι' ἧς ἀπατώμενοι θανατούμεθα ... σωζομένων σκάνδαλον ... παγκόσμιος θάνατος, ἀκατάσχετον κακόν.*

13. MUNITIZ, *Autobiographia*, 91.14-92.1: *Ἄθρους ἀκάθεκτος ἡ μαινὰς τῷ ἡμετέρῳ σεμνείῳ προσέρραξε, μετὰ βαρείας ὅσῳ καὶ σφοδρᾶς τῆς πομπῆς, ὀξύρρου δίκην χειμάρρου πολυμιγοῦς.*

14. *Ibidem*, 92.24-26.

15. *Ibidem*, 94.88-93.

16. *Ibidem*, 36,71.3-10.

17. *Ibidem*, 36,73.1-2.

that his brave conduct towards Marchesina, the *ἄρχουσαν τῆς αἰσχύνης*, resulted in his exclusion from the theological discussions with the Latins[18]. In conclusion, Blemmydes, from whom Gregoras seems to have drawn his information on Marchesina, certainly did not show the same forgiving attitude for John Vatatzes' deeds; rather, as a protagonist of the episode, he describes it as an event that brought him into conflict with imperial authority[19]. Also, this event seems to have "haunted" his life in a way, since even in other writings Blemmydes criticizes the emperor's submission to abominable pleasures, by using particular phrases referring to the unprincipled Marchesina[20].

Undoubtedly, Gregoras' source, as already mentioned, is the work of Blemmydes, since, on one hand the historian describes the event of Marchesina's expulsion from the church, not preserved in any other source, and, on the other, speaks about "love spells", recalling other texts by Blemmydes about the notorious Marchesina, whom he indirectly likens to the witch Circe[21]. However, Gregoras was not a protagonist of the events, so he does not insist particularly, nor is he that critical of the emperor. On the contrary, he appears apologetic towards the person of Vatatzes and gives a different dimension, since with dramatic intensity[22] he presents the emperor repenting for his dissolute life. This reception of the events does not appear in any other source. It is possible that Gregoras had taken into account George Akropolites' testimony about Marchesina[23]. In any case, Akropolites, in a short evaluation of the life of John

18. *Ibidem*, 67, 50.1-14.

19. Blemmydes' opposition to imperial authority is evident in his Letter, resembling a "newspaper" providing information about the writer's rough condition, after his behaviour towards Marchesina: *Πάλιν ἡμεῖς ἐν πνεύματι τολμητίαι, καὶ πάλιν ἡμῖν ἀπειλαὶ καὶ περιστάσεις καὶ κίνδυνοι*, *ibidem*, 91.1-2.

20. Nikephoros Blemmydes, *Λόγος ὁποῖον δεῖ εἶναι τὸν βασιλέα*, *PG* 142, cols 611-658, here at 613-616, as well as his other work entitled *Λόγος, ὃς ἐπεστάλη τῷ βασιλεῖ*, *ibidem*, cols 658-674, here at col. 659. In both orations Blemmydes points out that a just king should not become a victim of women, who put spells on men, like the mythical Circe.

21. *Ibidem*, *Λόγος, ὃς ἐπεστάλη τῷ βασιλεῖ*, col. 659.

22. The literary description of Vatatzes' great love for Marchesina, recalls Psellos' narration concerning the love empress Zoe felt for Michael Paphlagon, see I. Polemis, Michael Psellos the Novelist: Some Notes on the Story of the Empress Zoe, in: *Myriobiblos. Essays on Byzantine Literature and Culture*, ed. by Th. Antonopoulou, S. Kotzabassi and M. Loukaki [Byzantinisches Archiv 29], Berlin–Boston 2015, 285-293.

23. On Gregoras' study of Pachymeres and Akropolites, see A. Karpozilos, *Βυζαντινοί Ιστορικοί και Χρονογράφοι, (13ος-15ος αι.)*, vol. IV, Athens 2015, 144-146.

Vatatzes, observes that the emperor fell in love several times, after his first wife Eirene died, but his love for Marchesina was so blatant, that he allowed his mistress to have an entourage becoming of the empress and to wear the imperial symbols[24].

Another woman who became the object of Gregoras' sharp criticism was Eirene-Yolanda of Montferrat, the second wife of Andronikos II Palaiologos. An ambitious and ruthless woman, she exercised extortion on her husband the emperor, when he clearly showed that he would not concede power to any of the sons he had with her (John, Theodoros, and Demetrios), since he already had two sons from his first marriage to Anna of Hungary, Michael and Constantine. According to Gregoras, Eirene tried to take advantage of her husband's love for her, in order to either displace Michael completely from the succession of the Empire, or to achieve the administration of the Byzantine state in accordance with western models. With this novelty (*καινότερον*), the historian commented, the government, which had been instituted *Ῥωμαίοις ἀρχῆθεν*, was in danger[25]. Eirene disturbed her husband day and night with her irrational ambitions. Indeed, Gregoras, in order to describe the tension between the spouses, says that Eirene had become so tiresome with her constant political demands, that her husband's love for her withered and in the end he removed her from the bridal bed:

> "These things happened often, without anyone else knowing about them. In the end, the emperor reached the point where he could not handle them. Therefore his great love for her gradually withered and was replaced by fierce hatred, which, however, was unknown to most people. In the end, Andronikos displaced her also from their bridal bed"[26].

---

24. George Akropolites, *Χρονικὴ Συγγραφὴ* (ed. A. HEISENBERG and P. WIRTH, *Georgii Acropolitae Opera*, Leipzig 1903, repr. 1978), 104.1-10. See also MACRIDES, *George Akropolites* (as in footnote 7), 275-276. It seems that Gregoras is quoting from Akropolites' History, but it is rather certain that he is aware of Blemmydes' Letter as well. For a different approach to Marchesina's love story, see N. KOUTRAKOU, Politics, Strategies and Women in Byzantium, in the present volume, 64-65.

25. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 234.7 ff.

26. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 235.8-13: *Ταῦτα πολλάκις γινόμενα καὶ μηδενὸς ἑτέρου τῶν πάντων γινώσκοντος φέρειν οὐκ ἦν εἰς τέλος τῷ βασιλεῖ. Διὸ καὶ τὰ τῆς φλεγμαινούσης ἐκείνης στοργῆς ἤδη κατὰ μικρὸν ἐμαραίνετο, καὶ ἀντεισήγετο μάχη διάπυρος μέν, λανθάνουσα δ' ἔτι τοὺς πλείστους. Τέλος δὲ καὶ αὐτὴν ἀπέστερξε τὴν τοῦ λέχους αὐτῆς κοινωνίαν.*

After her estrangement from Andronikos II, the empress fled to Thessalonike (1303), where, according to Gregoras, she took pains to humiliate her husband in every possible way, by making public her husband's secrets, *τοῦτο μόνον φυλαξαμένη, τὸ πρὸς δήμους καὶ πλήθη προφέρων αὐτὰ*. She, who earlier pretended to be humble, now became *ὑβριοπαθοῦσα* and *μαινομένη* and revealed things about her husband which would cause the worst prostitute to blush with shame (vol. I, 236.2-10). Her plots against Andronikos II reached the point of conspiring with her son in law, the Serbian *kralj* Stephen Uroš Milutin (vol. I, 236.10-13). At this point the historian bursts into delirious misogyny, by saying that female character is highly unpredictable[27] and extremely prone to lying and to all kinds of slander.

The author does not distinguish according to the social position of women. On the contrary, he states that if a woman is of noble ancestry and possesses power she can become even more ruthless and then *εὐμενοῦς δεῖ θεοῦ καὶ θαλάσσης μεγάλης ἀποπλῦναι τὰς ὕβρεις τε καὶ συκοφαντίας τὸν ἄθλιον, καθ' οὗ τὴν γλῶσσαν ἡ πονηρὰ κεκίνηκεν* (vol. I, 236.22-237.2). With time, Eirene's hopes for restoring her sons to the imperial throne were shattered[28]; however, she herself continued to be active on the political level, as Gregoras notes, by harming her husband and the whole Empire, sending vast amounts of money, jewelry, and luxurious garments to her son-in-law, the *kralj* of Serbia (vol. I, 241.13 ff), in order to see her daughter live in the same wealth as the Byzantine emperor. Besides, she had one more hope, in case her daughter gave birth to children who would conquer the Byzantine Empire[29]. The historian continues by explaining that God is against acts beyond measure, which was why Eirene's desperate efforts were not materialized. Therefore, divine justice punished the

27. The word *εὐρίπιστος* portrays the capricious and unpredictable female character and may have been quoted from John Chrysostomos' sermon: *Αἱ γυναῖκες ὑμῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις σιγάτωσαν. Οὐ γὰρ ἐπιτέτραπται αὐταῖς λαλεῖν, ἀλλ' ὑποτάσσεσθαι, καθὼς καὶ ὁ νόμος λέγει*, *PG* 61, cols 315-322, here at col. 316: *ὅτι ἀσθενέστερον πώς ἐστιν ἡ γυνὴ καὶ εὐρίπιστον καὶ κοῦφον*. Gregoras uses an almost identical expression for another noble married woman that cheated on her husband, see below in this article, 152.

28. On Eirene's constant efforts to marry her sons to women that could offer them the chance to rule a kingdom, see H. Constantinidi-Bibicou, Yolande de Montferrat, Impératrice de Byzance, *L'hellénisme contemporain* 4 (1950), fasc. No 6, 425-442, esp. 429-435.

29. These hopes were pointless, as Gregoras (*Roman History*, vol. I, 243.11-13) clearly says that Simonis' womb had been damaged, due to the incompatible sexual match of the eight years-old princess with the 40 years-old *kralj* Milutin.

thirst for power of Andronikos II's wife. Eirene died in 1317 and Gregoras summarizes her actions, by saying that she had harmed the Empire by spending public money (*ἐξεκένωσε Ῥωμαϊκὰ χρήματα*[30]) and with the political innovations she attempted to introduce (*τὰς ἐπινοίας ... ἐνεωτέρισε*[31]).

This is not the only example of an ambitious woman condemned by Gregoras. In 1335 the illegitimate daughter of Andronikos III Eirene was wedded to Basil Megas Komnenos, emperor of Trebizond. Soon, however, Basil proved to be unfaithful, since he had an affair with another woman, who had the same name. According to Gregoras, it was an *ἄθεσμος* mix. From a patriarchal act of John XIV Kalekas (1334-1347) we learn that Basil had completely neglected Eirene Palaiologina and *ἔλαβεν ἄλλην μοιχαλίδα καὶ συνοικῇ ταύτῃ*. Indeed, Kalekas demanded that the metropolitan of Trebizond should take a position by condemning Basil's conduct immediately and make sure the adulterous woman was removed, otherwise the relationships between the patriarchate and the metropolis of Trebizond would be broken.

Gregoras initially refers with sympathy to the betrayed wife Eirene, whom Basil had driven away from his palace. However, the same historian implies that she may have been responsible for Basil's sudden death[32]. Later, in 1340, the widow of the emperor of Trebizond Basil, Eirene, sent envoys to her father Andronikos III, asking him to find her a new husband. Before the mission was completed, rumors reached Constantinople that the empress had a love affair with the domestikos of Trebizond, unknown from other sources. This may have been Eirene's ultimate attempt to remain in power in Trebizond, which, however, proved to be unfulfilled, since civil war immediately broke out there[33]. Eirene's case gave Gregoras the opportunity to condemn once more the thirst for power as a female flaw:

> "Because, when power flatters the appetite and dispositions of female desire, then every barrier is broken, that's why there were

30. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 241.16.

31. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 241.20-22.

32. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 549.3 ff. The writer also attributes Basil's premature death to divine punishment, because of his infidelity towards his lawful wife. On Basil's infidelity, see Fr. Miklosich and I. Müller, *Acta et diplomata graeca medii aevi sacra et profana*, vols 1-6, Vienna 1860-1890, repr. Athens 1996, here vol. I, 199; S. P. Karpov, *Istorija Trapezundskoj Imperii*, Sankt Peterburg 2007; Greek transl. by E. Kriftseskaya and A. Eustathiou, *Ιστορία της Αυτοκρατορίας της Τραπεζούντας*, Athens 2017, 227-229.

33. Karpov, *Ιστορία* (as in footnote 32), 228-229.

whispers that the empress Eirene had a secret love affair with the great domestikos of Trebizond"[34].

Gregoras speaks in a similar demeaning manner about one more woman, Anna of Savoy. During the civil war between the regency[35] and John Kantakouzenos, Anna formed an alliance with the ruthless Alexios Apokaukos and with patriarch John Kalekas (1334-1347). The motivation for this petty, according to Gregoras, alliance was no other than Anna's jealousy of Kantakouzenos and his wife, Eirene (vol. II, 761.20-762.6). The historian, in an attempt to explain Anna's behaviour even further, expressed the following conviction:

> *Οὐ τοσοῦτον δ' οἶμαι νεμεσῴη ἄν τις αὐτῇ, μὴ δυνηθείσῃ διαβλέψαι καὶ διακρῖναι τὸ κρεῖττον ἀπὸ τοῦ χείρονος, γυναικὶ τε οὔσῃ καὶ ἀλλοφύλου τροφῆς καὶ διαίτης ἡλικιώτιδι, καὶ ἅμα μὴ δυναμένῃ παντάπασιν ἀνανῆψαι τοῦ τῆς ζηλοτυπίας πάθους...* (vol. II, 761.19-23) (my underlining).

It is noteworthy that Gregoras, a true adherent of the traditional Roman idea, accuses Anna of lack of critical thought for three reasons: first, because she was a woman (sic)[36], secondly, because she was foreign to Byzantine culture and

---

34. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 551.8-11: *Ἐπεὶ δ' ἐξουσίας κολακευούσης τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν τῆς γυναικείας ὀρέξεως πάντα χαλινὰ διαῤῥήγνυται, λανθανούσαις μίξεσι χρῆσθαι τὴν βασιλίδα Εἰρήνην ἐψιθυρίζετο πρὸς τὸν μέγαν δομέστικον τῶν Τραπεζουντίων.* On Eirene's political role, see N. KOUTRAKOU, Summit diplomacy with a Female Face: Women as Diplomatic Actors in Late Byzantium (forthcoming).

35. AIK. CHRISTOPHILOPOULOU, Ἡ ἀντιβασιλεία εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον, *Σύμμεικτα* 2 (1970), 1-144, esp. 91-127.

36. In another passage Gregoras (*Roman History*, vol. II, 604.1-3) explains that patriarch John Kalekas mocked Anna's *γυναικείαν ἁπλότητα*. This explanation is a "topos" in Byzantine literature. For example, John Kantakouzenos (*Ἱστοριῶν Βιβλία Δ'*, ed. L. SCHOPEN, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris historiarum libri IV* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1828-1832 = Kantakouzenos, *History*), vol. II, 470.21-23 portrays Anna in a similar way. In this passage, Anna is considered incapable of handling the civil war of the years 1341-1349 for many reasons, but mainly because of her *γυναικείαν ἀσθένειαν*. About the common belief ("topos") that women's power and social status were inferior compared to men's; see also L. JAMES, Introduction: Women's Studies, Gender Studies, Byzantine Studies, in: *Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium*, ed. by L. JAMES, London–New York 1997, xi-xxiv. This "topos" is also to be found in ancient writers, such as Thucydides (see e.g. Book III, 74, 3-4). On the term *ἀσθενὲς* in Byzantine legal texts, see H. SARADI-MENDELOVICI, A Contribution to the Study of the Byzantine Notarial Formulas: The *infirmitas sexus* of Women and the

third because she was possessed by jealousy. Gregoras' anti-Latin disposition, a topic that recurs often in his *History*[37], is obvious in this passage. His attitude is due among other factors to the intense presence of the Latins, not only in the city of Constantinople[38], but especially within the Byzantine court[39]. What motivated him even more against the Latins was his personal confrontation with Barlaam the Calabrian[40].

But let us return to Gregoras' critical attitude regarding the recklessness of the empress Anna (vol. II, 702.14-22). The historian, well informed about the political events, remarked with skepticism that after the entry of Kantakouzenos (1347), the state was financially desolate and a basic reason was the greed (*τὸ χρυσομανές*) of the empress' character and of Apokaukos[41] (vol. II, 789.13-14). In fact, in order to describe the latter's cowardice, Gregoras does not hesitate to say that he was hiding in his fortress at Epibatai (Thrace), living not by men's but by women's standards. He characterizes him as a "little woman", showing how low the perception of the female character was.

---

sc. Velleianum, *BZ* 83 (1990), 72-90; see also J. BEAUCAMP, Le vocabulaire de la faiblesse feminine dans les textes juridiques romains du III[e] au VI[e] siècle, *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 54 (1976), 485-508 (= EADEM, *Femmes, patrimoines, normes à Byzance* [Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de recherche 6], Paris 2010, I, 1-20).

37. See for example Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 28.1-2: *πολλῷ τῷ μέτρῳ τὴν σκυθικὴν ἀπήνειαν ὑπερέβησαν*; vol. I, 96.13-14 and II, 834.21: *λατινικὴν ὀφρῦν*; vol. II, 687.3-4: *τήν γε μὴν Λατινικὴν κατὰ Σκυθῶν ἐκείνην αὐθάδειαν*, etc.

38. At that time, the anti-Latin ideology was also attributed to Latin commercial dominance over Byzantium; cf. N. OIKONOMIDÈS, *Hommes d'affaires grecs et Latins à Constantinople (XIIIe-XVe siècles)* [Conférence Albert-le Grand 1977], Paris 1979, 47-52. Of course this ideology was widespread after the Fourth Crusade and the capture of Constantinople by the Latins, see P. GOUNARIDIS, L'image de l'autre: les croisés vus par les Byzantins, in: *Quarta Crociata. Venezia–Bisanzio–Impero Latino*, ed. by GH. ORTALLI, G. RAVEGNANI and P. SCHREINER, Venice 2006, vol. I, 81-95.

39. D. AGORITSAS, *Κωνσταντινούπολη, η πόλη και η κοινωνία της στα χρόνια των πρώτων Παλαιολόγων*, Thessalonike 2016.

40. P. A. M. LEONE, *Fiorenzo o intorno alla sapienza* [Byzantina e neohellenica neapolitana 4], Napoli 1975. This conflict spurred him on to write several letters; Gregoras' epistolography has recently been analysed by A. SKLAVENITI, *Συμβολή στη μελέτη των επιστολών του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά*, Athens 2019, 44-52.

41. In another passage Gregoras (*Roman History*, vol. II, 600.17) blames again Apokaukos *ἐπὶ τῇ αὐτοῦ ἀνάνδρῳ καὶ γυναικώδει διαίτῃ* mocking his cowardice.

Gregoras' acute criticism was of course directed against Anna as well and his critical attitude was summarized, as shown above, mainly in one fact: she was a woman. His attitude may have partly been due to his conflict with the empress, following the attack Gregoras himself launched on a "magician" compatriot of her (vol. II, 735.9-18), whom he reportedly ridiculed in the imperial palace. The historian thinks that, because of this event, he became targeted[42]. Regardless, however, of the reason for the empress Anna's hatred towards Gregoras, it is a fact that in the fourteenth century women who belonged to the imperial family appear to be seriously involved, by claiming perhaps even institutional roles, in decisions related to the government and the Church of the Byzantine state[43].

Another woman intensely involved in political matters was John VI Kantakouzenos' mother, Theodora. Theodora was widowed at a young age, in 1294, and until her death, in 1342, she devoted herself to the upbringing of her son, but also to supporting him at every level. She was a dynamic woman, to whom Andronikos III had entrusted the defense of Didymoteichon in the year 1322, during the civil war between Andronikos II and Andronikos III Palaiologos. Theodora, together with Anna of Savoy, defended Didymoteichon in 1327, whereas during the years 1335-1336 the two women averted a rebellion caused by the despot Demetrios and the Genoese[44], somewhat reminiscent of the analogous case of Anna Dalassene and Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118)[45].

---

42. *Ibidem*, vol. II, 725.14-17: *καὶ πρώτη τις ἦν αὕτη πρόφασις, τὸ τῆς ἐμῆς ἐκείνης ἡσυχίας συνεχὲς διακόψασα καὶ μήνιδος ἐγκατορύξασα σπέρματα ταῖς τῆς καρδίας αὔλαξι τῆς βασιλίδος κατ' ἐμοῦ* (my underlining).

43. A. E. Laiou, The Role of Women in Byzantine Society, *JÖB* 31/1 (1981) (= *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4.-9. Oktober 1981. Akten, Hauptreferate* I/1), 233-260 (= Eadem, *Gender, Society*, as in footnote 1, I).

44. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. I, 125.15-20. In this passage Kantakouzenos points out that Andronikos assigned the two women the task of controlling Didymoteichon. Kantakouzenos' comment is that his mother was versed in politics and she was also extremely prudent, although she was a woman (*ἔμπειρος πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων καὶ φρονήσεως ἐρρωμενεστέρας ἢ κατὰ φύσιν γυναικείαν τυχοῦσα*) (my underlining). See C. Kyrris, Le role de la femme dans la société byzantine particulièrement pendant les derniers siècles, *JÖB* 32/2 (1982), 468-469.

45. É. Malamut, Une femme politique d'exception à la fin du XIe siècle: Anne Dalassène, in: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes à Byzance et en Occident (VIe-XIe siècles)*, ed. by S. Lebecq, A. Dierkens, R. Le Jan and J.-M. Sansterre, Lille 1999, 103-120, and B. Hill, *Imperial Women in Byzantium 1025-1204: Power, Patronage and Ideology*, New York 1999, 143-144.

The political role of Theodora Palaiologina Kantakouzene is highlighted also by her son John Kantakouzenos, in his historical work, who characterizes her as «ἔμπειρον» *πολιτικῶν πραγμάτων καὶ φρονήσεως*[46].

Theodora Kantakouzene was finally imprisoned in 1341[47] by the vicious, as Gregoras calls him, Apokaukos and died in early 1342. In his final evaluation the historian comments with sympathy on Theodora and refers to her incarceration as *ἄτιμον* (= "unjust"), whereas he also laments the distress that ultimately led the woman to her death[48]. Gregoras, expressing his sympathy towards Theodora, as he describes in detail the emotions of the recluse Theodora, echoes the agony of the Constantinopolitan aristocracy, whose adherent and advocate the historian was at least until 1351. Probably, this sympathy of Gregoras is due to the great friendship that connected him with Kantakouzenos, at least until 1347[49], as well as to the fact that Theodora represented the continuation of the "Roman" tradition, which the historian was defending[50].

Likewise, Gregoras refers to Eirene Kantakouzene, wife of John VI Kantakouzenos in flattering terms. In several parts of his *History* he emphasizes her acute-mindedness, underlining that she went beyond the conventions of female nature[51]. Here, Gregoras reflects the established belief that women are inferior, as found in several texts[52], however he acknowledges that some women were exceptions on the level of critical thinking. Why does the polymath historian demonstrate a different view on women in the case of Eirene? It

---

46. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. I, 138.5-21 (see above, footnote 44) and vol. I, 260.3-5.

47. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. II, 609.10.

48. Gregoras (*ibidem*, vol. II, 617.6-618.9) speaks with great compassion describing Theodora's great distress that caused her death: *Καὶ μέντοι καὶ τὴν καρδίαν σφόδρα ἐπλήττετο καὶ στεναγμοὺς ἐκ βάθους ἀνέπεμπεν, ὥσπερ καπνοὺς θολερούς τε καὶ ὁμιχλώδεις καὶ πολλὴν τὴν ἔνδον τῆς ψυχῆς πικρίαν.*

49. Sklaveniti, *Συμβολή* (as in footnote 40), 287-291.

50. In many passages Gregoras recalls models of both Roman and Greek ancient legislators. His quotations are evidence of his anxiety for the Empire's status in his own time, see E. Kountoura Galaki, Πρότυπα αρχαίων νομοθετών κατά τις επιστολές του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά. Δίκαιο και πολιτική πρακτική, in: *Ἀντικήνσωρ* (as in footnote 4), 679-704, esp. 685-690.

51. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. III, 188.4-6: *Ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ βασιλὶς Εἰρήνη διανέστη τε παραχρῆμα καὶ δραστικώτερον ἢ κατὰ γυναικείαν φύσιν διανοησαμένη* (my underlining).

52. For example, even the birth of a girl was seen rather negatively, see K. Nikolaou, *Η γυναίκα στη Μέση Βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αγιολογικά κείμενα* [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine research. Monographs 6], Athens 2005, 31-35.

seems that Gregoras presents her in sympathetic terms, because he believed that the empress had different views from her husband and that she was hostile to Hesychasm[53]. In any case, Eirene is also portrayed by the historian as a dynamic woman actively engaged in politics, as well as in the religious matters that tormented the Empire during this troubled time.

II. Infidelity

As mentioned above, aristocratic descent, when it was not combined with prudence, created women who, according to Gregoras, were ruthless. This perception is colorfully reflected in his correspondence, where one letter of consolation stands out, addressed to an unknown recipient, perhaps deliberately left anonymous, in order not to expose him. Gregoras tries to console his recently married correspondent, because he found out that his beautiful woman had cheated on him and that in addition she was behaving with audacity towards him. Gregoras uses the same words as he had described Eirene-Yolanda of Montferrat in his historical work[54]. He consoles, if this could be called a consolation, the betrayed husband with mythological examples, whereas in the end, with a philosophical disposition, he says that there is no life without distress, but if one wants less sorrows, he should either avoid marriage altogether, or get married to an ugly woman, so that he is not forced to share

53. See for example, Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. III, 94.20-96.7, where Eirene recalls the advice of the imprisoned Gregoras (1351-1354) and attributes the Empire's misfortunes to Kantakouzenos' acceptance of the Palamite doctrine: *μέμνημαι τοίνυν οὐχ ἅπαξ, οὐδὲ δὶς που καὶ τρὶς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ μάλα δήπου γε πολλάκις ἀμφοῖν ἡμῖν εἰπόντος τοῦ Γρηγορᾶ κατὰ τὰς ἐνταυθοῖ πολλάκις ἰδιαζούσας μακρᾶς καὶ πολυειδεῖς ἡμῶν ὁμιλίας (οἶσθα δὲ καὶ αὐτός) τὰς βίβλους εἶναι τοῦ Παλαμᾶ δυσσεβείας πλήρεις μακρᾶς ... σκεπτέον οὖν μὴ θεοῦ μαχομένου διὰ τὸ δόγμα πονῶμεν ἀνήνυτα.* In the same passage Eirene tells her husband that before his official support for Palamas, everything was fortunate for them, whereas after 1351 misfortune overpowered them: *ibidem*, vol. III, 98.6-16. About the couple's argument over the Palamite controversy since 1347, see also *ibidem*, vol. III, 108.6-22.

54. Gregoras, *Epistles* (ed. P. A. M. Leone, *Nicephori Gregorae Epistulae*, vols I-II, Matino 1982 = Gregoras, *Epistles*), vol. II, 123.6 ff. In the same epistle, Gregoras repeats (ep. 123.23-30) that there is nothing so unpredictable as female character, nor as willing to calumniate people: *οὐδὲν οὕτως εὑρίπιστον ὡς γνώμη γυναικὸς οὐδέ γε προχειρότερον ἐς τὸ πιθανὰς ξυνθεῖναι διαβολὰς καὶ συκοφαντίας καὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα κακὰ περιτρέψαι τοῖς ἀνεγκλήτοις ἀνδράσιν. ἂν δὲ καὶ δόξῃ καὶ γένει προέχουσα τύχῃ, ἃ τοὺς ἐλέγχους τῶν ἐγκλημάτων διαστρέφει ῥαδίως καθάπερ κύβους, τότ' εὐμενοῦς δεῖ θεοῦ καὶ μεγάλης θαλάττης ἀποπλῦναι τὰς ὕβρεις τε καὶ συκοφαντίας καθ' οὗ τὴν γλῶτταν ἡ πονηρὰ κεκίνηκεν.*

her[55]. In concluding the letter, Gregoras wishes his friend that he will be able to endure the disaster, in order not to be confronted with worse situations[56]. It should be noted here that this is the only case where Gregoras is preoccupied with "spicy" themes in the entire corpus of his letters.

Gregoras refers in a stinging manner to one more woman who proved to be fatal for the course of the Empire, since, according to the historian, she was the pretext for the civil war between the two Andronikoi (1321-1328). She was a woman *τῶν οὐκ ἀσήμων, τὸν δὲ τρόπον ἑταίραν*. At night she would receive as her lover not only the young Andronikos III, but also another handsome young man. For this reason Andronikos III was madly jealous of her and one night, when his brother the despot Manuel arrived at her home looking for him, the imperial guards, mistaking him for Andronikos III's rival lover, killed the despot. This loss caused his father Michael IX to die soon and caused the anger of his grandfather against his namesake grandson (vol. I, 285.12-286.16).

III. Female scholars

From Gregoras' references to women so far, the historian's derogatory view of them is noticeable, since he adopts the classical perception that they are inferior in perception and competences. Are there cases where Gregoras shows admiration for female nature?

Let's look at the distinctive feature that makes the scholar admire a woman. For Gregoras, an irresistible quality is primarily education. In his *History* he speaks with admiration of women who were either educated, or were distinguished by their morals and their Christian faith. A significant example of the first category is the narration regarding Eudokia Palaiologina from Thessalonike, with whom Andronikos II's son Constantine fell strongly in love. She was, according to Gregoras, a woman of incomparable beauty and

---

55. *Ibidem*, 50-53: *οὐκ ἔστιν εὑρεῖν βίον ἄλυπον ἐν οὐδενί· εἰ δ' ἀλυπότερον καὶ αὐτὸς ἐβούλου τὸν τοῦ βίου δραμεῖν δίαυλον, δυοῖν ἔδει σε θάτερον, ἢ μὴ γῆμαι τὸ παράπαν ἢ μὴ καλήν, ἵνα μὴ καὶ κοινήν*. For a detailed analysis of this letter, see SKLAVENITI, *Συμβολή* (as in footnote 40), 121-122.

56. He may be implying the harsh punishments against the adulteresses, see K. PITSAKIS (ed.), *Κ. Ἀρμενοπούλου, Πρόχειρον νόμων ἢ ἑξάβιβλος*, Athens 1971, 344-350, esp. 346, 14: *Καὶ ἡ ιθ' νεαρὰ τοῦ κυροῦ Λέοντος περὶ τοῦ ἐπ' αὐτοφώρῳ ἁλόντος μοιχοῦ ἢ μοιχαλίδος, ὥστε καὶ ἀμφοτέρους ῥινοκοπεῖσθαί φησι* (my underlining)...and 347,19: *Οἱ μοιχοὶ τυπτόμενοι καὶ κουρευόμενοι ῥινοκοπείσθωσαν, οἱ δὲ μέσοι καὶ ὑπουργοὶ τῷ τοιούτῳ ἀσεβήματι γεγονότες τυπτόμενοι καὶ κουρευόμενοι διηνεκῶς ἐξοριζέσθωσαν.*

charm. In fact, he claims that her reputation was such, that most men fell in love with her without having seen her. Among the virtues nature had generously endowed her with, Gregoras enumerates the following:

"Nature was so generous to her, that it applied to her face great harmony and deposited great acute-mindedness in her brain, whereas she harmonized with her language considerable persuasiveness and rhetoric skill, as well as her intelligence and graceful speech. Also, the woman was not unfamiliar with heathen wisdom, i.e. one could observe that she could easily say everything and all kinds of things at the right moment, based on what she had read on her own and on what she had heard other people talking about; as a result she was called by us, the wiser, as the new Pythagorean Theano and a new Hypatia"[57] (my translation).

It is noteworthy that in the above passage Gregoras emphasises Eudokia's skills in secular education, without hesitating to liken her to Hypatia and Theano, two emblematic women, to whom he refers only once in his entire known oeuvre. This is due to his great interest in classical education, which he himself worked hard to promote with the function of his "didaskaleion"[58].

Further in his historical narration Gregoras describes the great love the despot Constantine felt for her. However, the attractive and educated woman rejected his love, because she was already married, until her first husband died and she married the despot Constantine. In this case, even the description of this love does not recall at all the above-mentioned love stories. What might be the case? In my opinion, Gregoras saw in the person of Eudokia an educated individual, whose every activity was the result of critical thought. For this reason exactly, Gregory does not find anything inferior or illegitimate about

57. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 293.22-294.7: *Οὕτω γὰρ ἡ φύσις περὶ τὴν ἄνθρωπον ἐφιλοτιμήσατο, ὥστε πολλὴν μὲν ἐπὶ τοῦ προσώπου τὴν εὐρυθμίαν ἐφήπλωσε, πολλὴν δὲ τὴν ὀξύτητα περὶ τὴν διάνοιαν ἐθησαύρισε, πολλὴν δὲ καὶ τῇ γλώττῃ ἐνήρμοσε τὴν πειθὼ καὶ δεινότητα καὶ τὸ εὔστροφον καὶ ἐπίχαρι τῆς ἠχοῦς. ἦν δὲ καὶ σοφίας τῆς θύραθεν οὐκ ἄμοιρος ἡ γυνή. ἦν γὰρ ἰδεῖν αὐτὴν πάντα καὶ παντοῖα ῥαδίως κατὰ καιρὸν ἐν ὁμιλίᾳ διὰ γλώσσης προφέρουσαν, ὅσα τε αὐτὴ δι' ἑαυτῆς ἀνεγνώκει καὶ ὅσα λεγόντων ἄλλων ἀκήκοεν, ὡς Θεανώ τινα Πυθαγορικὴν καὶ Ὑπατίαν ἄλλην ὀνομάζεσθαι ταύτην πρὸς τῶν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς σοφωτέρων* (my underlining).

58. A. Sklaveniti, Το διδασκαλείον του Νικηφόρου Γρηγορά, *Βυζαντινά Σύμμεικτα* 28 (2018), 141-167. It is noteworthy that in the first half of the fourteenth century the number of illiterate women of the aristocracy increases, see Laiou, The Role of Women (as in footnote 43), 253-257; Kyrris, Le role de la femme (as in footnote 44), 463-472; E. Fryde, *The Early Palaiologan Renaissance (1261-ca.1360)*, Leiden–Boston–Cologne 2000, 35.

the scholar Eudokia and her feelings. Thus, he refers to this love with lyricism, whereas its happy ending seems to arrive as a reward to the admirable woman[59].

Among the women scholars mentioned in the work of Gregoras Theodora Raoulaina is also notable: he had not met her, but the reputation of her scholarship was great, even until his time: *Φιλολόγος γὰρ ἦν ἡ γυνὴ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῆς γλώττης τοῦ πατριάρχου ἐξεχομένη* (vol. I, 178.22-23)[60].

Another woman, whose learnedness is praised is Eirene, daughter of the great Logothetes, Theodoros Metochites. Gregoras taught Eirene and her brother Nikephoros privately *τὰ τῶν θύραθεν καὶ ἡμετέρων βιβλίων αἰνιγματώδη καὶ γρίφα διαλευκαίνων*. Gregoras stresses that Eirene was *μεγαλοφυὴς ὁμοῦ καὶ φιλομαθής* (vol. I, 309.15-19). Nevertheless, her social role was predetermined by the conventions of the time. Thus, she may have been a scholar herself[61], however Metochites chose Gregoras as the guardian of his books and heir to his wisdom, since all three of his sons proved to be unworthy in this respect[62]. Obviously, the time could not allow a woman, even the literate one, an upgraded role.

The circle of women scholars-disciples of Gregoras also included Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina, to whom Gregoras addressed a letter and dedicated a work titled *Τοῦ φιλοσόφου κυροῦ Νικηφόρου τοῦ Γρηγορᾶ πρὸς τὴν βασιλίδα κυρὰν Ἑλένην τὴν Παλαιολογίναν Λύσεις ἀποριῶν, ἃς αὐτὴ πολλάκις ἐν ταῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν εἰσῆγεν ὁμιλίας*[63]. In his letter Gregoras praises her rhetoric skills, as

---

59. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 294.12-18: *Καὶ ἦν ἰδεῖν τὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος, τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἐρῶντος ἐν ἀλλοτρίῳ ζῶσαν τῷ σώματι. ἐπεὶ δὲ μετὰ χρόνον τινὰ τὸν βίον ὁ ταύτης ἀπέλιπε σύζυγος, ἤδη σφοδρότερον ἦν ἐγκείμενος ὁ δεσπότης καὶ πάντα λίθον κινῶν, τὸ τοῦ λόγου, νόμιμον ἀγαγέσθαι βουλόμενος σύζυγον. οὗ δὴ γεγονότος πασῶν εὐθὺς ἐξελάθετο γυναικῶν καὶ ἐρώτων ἄλλων.* The narration concerning this love affair has of course something fictional. On some aspects of how women are depicted in Byzantine sources, see A. KALDELLIS, The Study of Women and Children, Methodological Challenges and New Directions, in: *The Byzantine World*, ed. by P. STEPHENSON, London–New York 2010, 61-71.

60. On Theodora Raoulaina, see C. N. CONSTANTINIDES, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and early Fourteenth centuries* (1204-1310), 43-45. We assume that Gregoras does not focus on Raoulaina's personality, because she was a leading Arsenite and as far as we know, Gregoras speaks rather disparagingly of Arseniatic Schism, e.g. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 128.5-14; vol. I, 160.14-162.7.

61. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 306.11-16. Gregoras is of course exaggerating while comparing his student with Plato and Pythagoras.

62. SKLAVENITI, Το διδασκαλειον (as in footnote 58), 141-147.

63. Gregoras, *Epistles*, vol. II, ep. 42. About the *Λύσεις ἀπορίων*, see P. A. M. LEONE, Nicephori Gregorae «Antilogia» et «Solutiones Quaestionum», *Byz* 40 (1970), 488-513.

well as Helena's nature, by stating that she had inner knowledge on the reasons of beings, without having the need of empirical knowledge obtained through the senses[64]. It is noteworthy that Helena was distinguished for her scholarship and corresponded in the second half of the fourteenth century with Demetrios Kydones, who praises her writing virtues. Unfortunately, however, no works of hers are preserved[65].

One more woman scholar whom Gregoras mentions with admiration is Eirene-Eulogia Choumnaina. In his historical work[66], Gregoras devotes, through the voice of Agathangelos, several flattering words to the recently deceased Choumnaina (1354), recalling her dedication to monastic life and to her struggle in the defense of religion on the side of the anti-Palamites. It is curious how the philomath Gregoras does not insist on Choumnaina's scholarship, however there seems to be an explanation for this. If one goes through the entire work of Gregoras, she/he will realize that religiousness is a basic criterion of admiration, especially during the time when the author was actively involved in the Hesychast controversy, i.e. from 1347 onwards. Thus, it is obvious that the secluded Gregoras presented Choumnaina as the symbol of the anti-Palamite struggle, since her scholarship was a matter of secondary importance to him at the given time. For this reason, in the words of Agathangelos, Choumnaina is named as *ἡ τῷ ὄντι βασίλισσα* (the real queen), whereas it is pointed out that she had suffered *θορύβους καὶ διωγμοὺς καὶ ποικίλας ἐπαγωγὰς συμφορῶν ὑπὲρ τῶν θείων δογμάτων τῆς ἐκκλησίας* (vol. III, 238.2-6).

---

64. Gregoras, *Epistles*, vol. II, ep. 42, 30-36. In this passage one can trace the impact of Plotinos' "Enneades". The same distinction between the less talented people who acquire true knowledge through the senses and those really talented people that acquire true knowledge by nature is to be found in Gregoras' Phlorentios, see S. Mariev, Plotinus in the Phlorentios of Nikephoros Gregoras, in: *Koinotaton doron: Das späte Byzanz zwischen Machtlosigkeit und kultureller Blüte (1204-1261)*, ed. by A. Berger, G. Prinzing, S. Mariev and A. Riehle [Byzantinisches Archiv 31], Berlin–Boston 2016, 101-107. On Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina, see D. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Cantacuzenos ca. 1100-1460*, Washington, D.C. 1960, 135-137.

65. Fr. Kianka, The Letters of Demetrios Kydones to Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina, *DOP* 46 (1992), 155-164.

66. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. III, 238.2 ff. About Eirene Choumnaina, see A. Constantinides Hero, *A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance: The Correspondence of Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina* [The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 11], Brookline Mass. 1986, 15-20.

Gregoras refers to Simonis, daughter of Andronikos II and Eirene-Yolanda of Montferrat, also in a particularly favorable manner. Simonis was given to the Serbian *kralj* Stephen Uroš Milutin as his fourth wife, even though she was only five years old. More specifically, the *kralj* had sent a delegation, requesting to marry Eudokia[67], sister of Andronikos II Palaiologos, widow of John II Komnenos of Trebizond (Lazos[68]) and the mother of two children. However, Eirene was absolutely against such a marriage, since *τὴν ἐκείνου συνάφειαν ἀποτρόπαιον ἡγεῖτο καὶ οὐδ' ἄκροις ὡσὶν ἠνείχετο ἀκούειν τῶν λεγόντων* (vol. I, 203.1-3). Eirene's refusal shows the dynamics of the widow in Byzantine society, at a time when marriage was not the result of personal choice, but of social conventions and parental control[69]. Then, Andronikos II found himself in *ἀπορία* (confusion) since he absolutely wanted the renewal of friendly relations with the Serbian state, and decided, under the threats of the impatient ruler, to give his five-years-old daughter Simonis to the *kralj* as his wife[70]. Thus, in 1299, Milutin took Simonis. Gregoras comments that the bride was a baby at the time, whereas the *kralj* was already 40 years old, five years older than his father-in-law. Obviously, even by contemporary standards, this marriage was a scandal.

> "So, to make the story short, after the *kralj* consolidated and reinforced the treaties, in accordance with the emperor's wishes, he

67. A. Papadopulos, *Versuch einer Genealogie der Palaiologen*: 1259-1453, Munich 1932, repr. Amsterdam 1962, no. 52, 32-33.

68. *PLP* 12106.

69. On marriage as a matter of strategy in Byzantine society, see A. Laiou, *Mariage, amour et parenté à Byzance aux XI-XIII siècles* [Travaux et Mémoires. Monographies 7], Paris 1992, 91-111.

70. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 203.13 ff.: *Ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ μὲν Εὐδοκία τὴν ἐκείνου συνοίκησιν ὅλαις προθέσεσι τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπηρνεῖτο, ὁ δ' ἐκεῖθεν ἐμβριθῶς ἐπέκειτο ζητῶν, οὐ μικρὰς προστιθεὶς καὶ τὰς ἀπειλάς, ἀναγκασθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς μηνύει τῷ Κράλῃ περὶ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ θυγατρὸς Σιμωνίδος, πέμπτον τῆς ἡλικίας ἀγούσης ἔτος, ἵν' ὑπ' ἐκείνῳ λαβόντι τρέφοιτο, μέχρις ἂν ἐς τὸν νομιζόμενον ἔλθῃ τοῦ γάμου χρόνον, κἄπειτα σύζυγος αὐτῷ τοῦ λοιποῦ.* On Simonis' marriage to Milutin as a diplomatic gift to him, see A. Eastmond, Diplomatic Gifts: Women and Art as Imperial Commodities in the Thirteenth Century, in: *Liquid and Multiple: Individuals and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, ed. by G. Saint-Guillain and D. Stathakopoulos [Collège de France-CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 35], Paris 2012, 105-133, esp. 105-107.

returned taking with him Simonis, who was a baby, whereas he was already forty years old, five years older than the emperor, his father-in-law[71] (Andronikos II)".

In the end, Gregoras relates that the *kralj*'s wedding took place when Simonis turned 12 and Milutin was 50 (vol. I, 456.15-20), however, elsewhere in his work he emphatically states that the premature intercourse between the Serbian *kralj* and Simonis damaged her womb permanently; as a result she was unable to bear children (vol. I, 243.11-13). It is worth noting here that this type of engagement could be annulled, provided of course that the guardians had objections[72], whereas a preserved patriarchal act discourages laymen and clergymen from such "puberty" marriages[73]. Simonis suffered with endurance through this inappropriate marriage, but when her mother died in 1317 and she traveled to Constantinople, she refused to return to Serbia and, in an act of desperation, took the monastic habit: *ἔγνω τὸ μοναχικὸν ὑπελθοῦσα σχῆμα*

71. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 204, 8-13: *καὶ ἵνα τὰν μέσῳ συντέμῳ, στερρὰς καὶ μάλα βεβαίας ὁ κράλης τὰς σπονδὰς ποιησάμενος καὶ οἷαι κατὰ γνώμην ἦσαν τοῦ βασιλέως, ἐπάνεισι τὴν Σιμωνίδα λαβὼν βρέφος οὖσαν τεσσαρακοντούτης τυγχάνων αὐτὸς καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ πενθεροῦ καθ' ἡλικίαν προήκων πέντε ἔτεσιν ἔγγιστα.* According to J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nikephoros Gregoras Rhomäische Geschichte*, 1er Teil, Stuttgart 1973, 279, footnote 357, Simonis' father, Andronikos II, was 39 years old, while Milutin was already 44, therefore the age difference between the couple was even bigger.

72. *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel.* 1. Teil: *Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1315-1331*, eds. H. HUNGER and O. KRESTEN [CFHB 19/1], Vienna 1981, no. 92, 524: *Ἀνήνεγκεν ἐπὶ τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱεροῦ συνοδικοῦ δικαστηρίου ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τῶν Ἐννακοσίων χήρα γυνὴ Ἀποστολίνα, ὡς τὴν ἰδίαν θυγατέρα ὄγδοον τῆς ἡλικίας ἄγουσαν χρόνον πρεσβύτερός τις Πανθήρης καλούμενος ἀνδρί τινι συνήρμοσε δι' ἀρραβωνικῶν δεσμῶν ... ἡ γοῦν μετριότης ἡμῶν συνδιασκεψαμένη τοῖς περὶ αὐτὴν ἱερωτάτοις ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ παράνομον κρίνασα τόδε τὸ συνοικέσιον διὰ τὴν τοσαύτην τῆς κόρης ἀνηβότητα, κάντεῦθεν ἀκύρους εἶναι νομίσασα καὶ τοὺς ἐπ' αὐτῇ προβάντας τοιούτους ἀρραβωνικοὺς δεσμούς* (my underlining).

73. *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel.* 3. Teil: *Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1350-1363*, eds J. KODER, M. HINTERBERGER and O. KRESTEN [CFHB 19/3], Vienna 2001, no. 219, 264-271. We lack the exact date of this text. Among other advice, the church urges the flock to avoid in every possible way the «ἄνηβον συνοικέσιον». Otherwise, in case a priest dares to make such a marriage, he should be defrocked (*ἔστω καθῃρημένος καὶ γεγυμνωμένος πάσης ἱερωσύνης*). If the groom was a layman, he should be anathematized (*ἔστω ὑπὸ βάρους φρικώδους ἀφορισμοῦ*). Of course, such restrictions prove that the cases of incompatible marriages (*ἀνήβων γάμων*) were common in Byzantine society.

φυγεῖν οὑτωσὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ συνδιαίτησιν (vol. I, 288.2-3). Being aware, however, that her flight could cause war and, not wanting to cause her father such a big problem, she fled to Serres.

When she appeared to the Serbs escorting her dressed in the monastic garb, they were surprised and did not know whether they should use force, in order to lead her back to her husband. The solution was given by her half-brother, the despot Constantine, who rectified what Gregoras calls καινοτόμημα (innovation). Constantine violently tore up her robe and handed her over to the Serbs in tears, to be taken to the *kralj* (vol. I, 288.3-23) and to suffer her fate until the end. Simonis was relieved only with the death of her husband, in 1321, when she was finally able to return to Constantinople, where she was tonsured a nun (vol. I, 533.5-9). During the civil war between the two Andronikoi she reportedly ignored the pressure of her nephew Andronikos III for a new marriage (vol. I, 394.12-14). The example of Simonis shows that, as in previous centuries, it was extremely difficult for a medieval woman to refuse the marriage already arranged by her family[74], whereas one solution was recourse to monastic life[75]. By contrast, widows had the right to veto a new marriage[76] and their presence in society was clearly more dynamic[77].

---

74. Well known examples of unsuccessful resistance to marriage are the cases of Psellos' mother, Theodote, as well as of Anna Komnene, who declares that her marriage came as a result of her father's persistence, see L. GARLAND, The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women: A Further Note on Conventions of Behaviour and Social Reality as Reflected in Eleventh and Twelfth Century Historical Sources, *Byz* 58 (1988), 361-393, esp. 367-368.

75. It was *ipso jure* provided that a marriage should be dissolved, in case either husband or wife entered a monastery: L. BURGMANN, *Ecloga Basilicorum* [Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte 15], Frankfurt am Main 1988, B.4.1.9, 176. See LAIOU, *Mariage, amour et parenté* (as in footnote 69), 113-136, esp. 115-116. For the same matter, see also MITSIOU, Late Byzantine Female Monasticism (as in footnote 1), 161-171, esp. 169.

76. Saint Basil prescribes that Ἡ ἐν τῇ χηρείᾳ ἑαυτῆς ἐξουσίαν ἔχουσαν ἀνδρὶ συνοικεῖν ἀνέγκλητος, εἰ μηδεὶς ἐστὶν ὁ διασπῶν τὸ συνοικέσιον, see Ἀμφιλοχίῳ περὶ κανόνων (ed. Y. COURTONNE, *Saint Basile Letters*, vols I-III, Paris 1957-1966), vol. II, epistle 199, §41, 162.

77. Even legislation treats widows differently, providing them with the power over their house and family, after their husband dies; see, for instance, the formulation in the anonymous *Ecloga Basilicorum* of the year 1142: BURGMANN, *Ecloga Basilicorum* (as in footnote 75), B.2.3.2, 81,26-30. For the position of the widow in the society, see SH. E. J. GERSTEL and S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Female Church Founders: The Agency of the Village Widow in Late Byzantium, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. THEIS, M. MULLETT, M. GRÜNBART, G. FINGAROVA and M. SAVAGE [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 2011/2012, 195-211, esp. 197-200. On

Another example of a "pre-puberty" princess led to matrimony is encountered again in the historical work of Gregoras, when the daughter of Andronikos III Palaiologos, nine years of age, married the 15 years-old son of the tsar of Bulgaria[78].

V. Women in captivity

Another element that aroused the author's admiration was the ethical superiority of a "Scythian" woman, who ransomed a Christian captive and had a child with him. When she was pregnant with their second child, she happened to witness a new horde of Christian captives, which included her husband's former wife. Her husband moved upon seeing the captive woman and the compassionate Scythian woman behaved with magnanimity and ransomed her as her servant, whereas she herself agreed to be baptized. However, during their visit to Constantinople, the first wife went to the Patriarchate, claiming her husband. However, again according to Gregoras, no solution could be given, since the Scythian woman did not appear to have committed anything wrong. Then, in an act of magnanimity, this woman volunteered to step back, provided that she received the price she had paid to liberate the Christian woman. She herself stated that she would remain alone, with her babies, in the mercy of God. The Christian wife went to Thrace, her birthplace, to collect the amount, but there she was captured again. According to Gregoras, divine justice was the factor that gave the solution, in order to satisfy the good woman. Besides the fact that no one in the Patriarchate appears to have questioned the woman's rights over the couple of slaves[79], Gregoras openly expresses his admiration for the greatness of the foreign woman, contrary his animosity towards the Latins, in the descriptions of Eirene of Montferrat and Anna of Savoy[80].

Likewise, the historian shows his admiration also for two sisters who fell captives in the hands of the Turks around 1280[81]. Since they were about to be

---

the power and freedom widows enjoyed, see also HILL, *Imperial Women in Byzantium* (as in footnote 45), 15-18.

78. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 546.16-21. On Eirene Palaiologina, see PAPADOPULOS, *Versuch einer Genealogie* (as in footnote 67), 48-49; *PLP* 91851.

79. Gregoras, *ibidem*, vol. I, 542.23-544.18. About the Scythian woman's rights over her slaves, see H. KÖPSTEIN, *Zur Sklaverei im ausgehenden Byzanz* [BBA 34], Berlin 1966, 126-127.

80. See above, "Love and political ambitions", 140-152.

81. On the loss of western Asia Minor, see SP. VRYONIS, Jr. *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth century*, 2nd rev. ed. New York 2011, 191-196.

given to different masters, they started lamenting in such a heart-breaking manner, beating their chests and making their faces bleed, so that in the end the fell dead: *εὐθὺς τοῦ ζῆν ἀπερράγησαν, ὥσπερ οὐκ ἀνεχομένης ἐνδοῦναι τῆς φύσεως διαζευχθῆναι τὰ σώματα πρότερον ἢ τὰς ψυχάς* (vol. I, 142.1-11). There is no way of knowing whether their intense lamenting was the actual cause of death, however the fate of captives, especially women, is described in dark colors. Writing about 50 years after the events, Gregoras records the impact, as he may have received it through the narrations of refugees from Asia Minor recounting their misfortunes. For the negative effects of captivity, it is indicative that Gregoras recounts in his *History* how the protovestiarios Andronikos died of his grief, reflecting, among other things, the fate of his wife and the indecent behaviour she would suffer in the hands of the enemies[82].

Conclusions

To summarize, women do not pass unnoticed in the historical and epistolary work of Nikephoros Gregoras. They make their presence felt, either with their scholarship (Eirene Metochitaina, Eudokia Palaiologina, Helen Kantakouzene Palaiologina), or with their illegitimate love affairs and their political ambitions (Marchesina, Eirene-Yolanda of Montferrat, Anna of Savoy), or even with episodes which demonstrate the disadvantageous position of women (Simonis, anonymous Scythian woman), who are pushed around either by fatherly authority or by the changes resulting from troubled times (captivity, wars). It is noteworthy that the author does not dedicate space to praise female virginity or motherhood[83]; he rather praises women distinguished by their education (Eudokia Neokaisareitissa Palaiologina) or their inner qualities (anonymous

82. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 413.11-17. The sexual abuse of captives seems to have been (and still remains) a common act of humiliating rivals, regardless of their sex. Conversely, on alternative attitudes towards captives in the Byzantine sources, cf. S. Patoura, *Οι αιχμάλωτοι ως παράγοντες επικοινωνίας και πληροφόρησης (4ος-10ος αι.)*, Athens 1994, 22-36.

It is shocking that Gregoras (*Roman History*, vol. III, 228.23-229.3) while imprisoned in the Chora monastery hears about Palamas' sexual abuse, when he was captured by Turks: *καὶ ἅμα τὸ σοδομιτικὸν καὶ παρὰ φύσιν πάθος τῆς ἀρρενομανίας, οὐκ οἶδ' ὁπότερον, εἴτ' εἰώθὸς σφίσι ποιεῖν εἰς ἐμπαιγμὸν τῶν ἁλισκομένων χριστιανῶν, εἴτ' ἐνδεδωκυίας τῆς θείας ἄνωθεν δίκης* (my underlining).

83. C. Galatariotou, Holy Women and Witches, Aspects of Byzantine Conceptions of Gender, *BMGS* 9 (1984-5), 55-94, esp. 86-94; Garland, The Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women (as in footnote 74), 361-393.

Scythian woman). This approach shows a clearly different view towards women, whose basic virtues usually highlighted in Byzantine literature are motherhood or chastity[84]. Certainly, the female persons admired by the author reveal his own interests and preferences: secular learning, ethical superiority, opposition to Palamite doctrine. Women remain a different world in relation to men, but we can however detect in Gregoras' work traces that allow us to characterize the author as a progressive man. It is known that the percentage of female scholars was reduced after Gregoras' death[85], possibly as a result of the considerable shrinkage of the Empire during its last century. Thus, the work of Gregoras still offers adequate proof that the Palaiologan Renaissance of the Letters also influenced the world of women of the ruling class, at a time when women were not absent from crucial political and ecclesiastical issues.

84. M. Loukaki, Το παιχνίδι των αντιθέσεων στα εγκώμια γυναικών. Η περίπτωση του Νικολάου Καταφλώρον, in: *Ἀντικήνσωρ* (as in footnote 4), 895-915, esp. 897-899.

85. Laiou, The Role of Women (as in footnote 43), 257.

Eleonora Kountoura Galaki*

Women Living on Palaiologan Naxos: The Epigraphic Evidence

ἡ γὰρ γραφὴ κράζοντας οἵδε τοὺς λίθους[1]

Epigraphic material is of particular interest, since it serves as a tool for direct access to the ideas of the society that creates it. Inscriptions[2] preserved in Byzantine churches provide reliable information concerning the patrons, the

* Institute of Historical Research/ The National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens.

1. Theodoros Prodromos, *Στίχοι ἐπιτύμβιοι εἰς τὸν πανσέβαστον σεβαστὸν κῦρον Κωνσταντῖνον τὸν Καμύτζην* (ed. W. Hörandner, *Theodoros Prodromos, Historische Gedichte* [WBS 11], Vienna 1974), 497-500 here at line 5.

2. For inscriptions as valuable historical sources, see G. Cavallo and C. Mango, Prefazione, in: *Epigrafia medievale greca e latina. Ideologia e funzione. Atti del seminario di Erice (12-18 settembre 1991)*, ed. by G. Cavallo and C. Mango [Biblioteca del "Centro per il collegamento degli studi medievali e umanistici in Umbria", Collana 11], Spoleto 1995, VII-XIV. S. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions and Donor Portraits in Thirteenth-Century Churches of Greece* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 226. Veröffentlichungen der Kommision für die TIB 5], Vienna 1992 (= Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*), 86. M. Panayotidi, The Question of the Role of the Donor and of the Painter. A Rudimentary Approach, *ΔΧΑΕ 17* (1993-1994), 143-156. A. Rhoby, The Meaning of Inscriptions for the Early and Middle Byzantine Culture. Remarks on the Interaction of Word, Image and Beholder, in: *Scrivere e leggere nell'alto medioevo. Spoleto, 28 aprile-4 maggio 2011* [Settimane di Studio della fondazione centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo 59], Spoleto 2012, 731-753. For issues related to the study of inscriptions, see G. Cavallo, Corpus delle iscrizioni bizantine e pratiche della cultura scritta. Note su questioni aperte e per prospettive future, in: *Inscriptions in Byzantium and Beyond. Methods-Projects-Case Studies*, ed. by A. Rhoby [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 478. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 38], Vienna 2015, 93-105. See also A. Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung. Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken.* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 374. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 15], Vienna 2009, vol. I, 37-73.

date and on certain occasions the property[3] of ecclesiastical monuments. People mentioned in inscriptions addressed God using their own written message as a conduit to divine attention[4], in hope of future salvation and admission to the kingdom of heaven. Through the inscriptions the donors linked their name with a church and tried to escape oblivion by being commemorated together with their family during the Holy Service[5]. Inscriptions contain references to the donors'/founders' names, sometimes their qualities, as well as the names of members of their family. Therefore, they may sometimes be examined as visual documents[6], which provide information about persons who might otherwise have remained unknown, revealing thus a momentary glimpse of the people of the past in their involvement with inscriptional activity. All the components included in an inscription constitute irrefutable witnesses of the society and the place which generated them.

This paper will deal with people living on Naxos and specifically with women who are mentioned in the surviving inscriptions within some painted Byzantine churches of the Cycladic island. Their dates range from the second half of the thirteenth until the two first decades of the fourteenth century. By then there was a complicated political situation which was characterized by two components: the Byzantines who regained control over the island, at least in a part of it, and the recently established Latins, whose position in the rural area of Naxos cannot be accurately defined at the time. This accounts for the complexity of the current political climate on Naxos: the island had

3. S. Kalopissi-Verti, Church Inscriptions as Documents: Chrysobulls - Ecclesiastical Acts - Inventories - Donations - Wills, *ΔΧΑΕ* 24 (2003), 79-88.

4. For the relationships between the devoted donors and their protector saint, see I. Drpić, *Epigram, Art, and Devotion in Later Byzantium*, Cambridge 2016, 95-98, 108-115.

5. The inscription in the church of Theotokos in Demos at Apeiranthos constitutes a typical example, see below, 172. See also R. S. Nelson, Image and Inscription: Pleas for Salvation in Spaces of Devotion, in: *Art and Text in Byzantine Culture*, ed. by L. James, Cambridge-New York 2007, 100-119, esp. 110. Cf. A. Riehle, Καί σε προστάτιν ἐν αὐτοῖς τῆς αὐτῶν ἐπιγράψομεν σωτηρίας: Theodora Raulaina als Stifterin und Patronin, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis, M. Mullett, M. Grünbart, G. Fingarova and M. Savage [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 2011/2012, 299-315, esp. 299-300.

6. L. James, "And Shall These Mute Stones Speak?" Text as Art, in: *Art and Text* (as in footnote 5), 188-206, esp. 189. Rhoby, The Meaning (as in footnote 2), 732.

passed to the jurisdiction of the Latin's since 1213[7], but the Byzantines tried to regain control over the Aegean Sea[8]. Under such specific conditions a striking Byzantine pictorial movement thrived on the island, although only briefly, as the available material shows.

Naxos' pictorial production has been characterized as "impressive"[9] not only in terms of its artistic value, but also in terms of quantity. The number of wall-paintings there is vastly greater than in the small number of churches on the other Cycladic islands[10]. Moreover, another peculiarity lies in the brief duration of the island's pictorial production, as, according to the epigraphic testimony, it suddenly and massively appeared after the second half of the thirteenth century

7. For the time of the Latins' establishment on Naxos, see G. SAINT-GUILLAIN, Les conquérants de l'archipel: l'Empire Latin de Constantinople, Venise et les premiers seigneurs des Cyclades, in: *Quarta crociata. Venezia-Bisanzio-Impero Latino*, ed. by GH. ORTALLI, G. RAVEGNANI and P. SCHREINER, vol. I, Venice 2006, 125-237, esp. 224-225. For the complicated relationships in the Aegean Sea during the first century of Latin rule, see M. KOUMANOUDI, The Latins in the Aegean after 1204: Interdependence and Interwoven Interests, in: *Urbs Capta. The Fourth Crusade and its Consequences*, ed. by A. LAIOU [Réalités byzantines 10], Paris 2005, 247-267, here at 247-248. See also M. KOUMANOUDI, Οι Λατίνοι στο Αιγαίο μετά το 1204. Αλληλεξαρτήσεις και διαπλεκόμενα συμφέροντα, *Άγκυρα* 3 (2010), 43-85.

8. H. AHRWEILER, *Byzance et la mer. La marine de guerre, la politique et les institutions maritimes de Byzance aux VIIe-XVe siècles* [Bibliothèque byzantine. Études 5], Paris 1966, 357-363. M. ANGOLD, Michael VIII Palaiologos and the Aegean, in: *Liquid and Multiple: Individuals and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, ed. by G. SAINT-GUILLAIN and D. STATHAKOPOULOS [Collège de France - CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 35], Paris 2012, 27-44.

9. A. MITSANI, Η μνημειακή ζωγραφική στις Κυκλάδες κατά το 13ο αιώνα, *ΔΧΑΕ* 21 (2000), 93-122 (= MITSANI, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική), here at 93-94, 95-96. See also the earlier study on the subject by M. PANAYOTIDI, Les peintures murales de Naxos, *Corsi Ravennati* 38 (1991), 281-303.

10. M. CHATZEDAKIS, Εισαγωγικές σημειώσεις, in: *Νάξος*, Athens 1989, 9-16. The Greek archaeologist has long observed this discrepancy, however without providing satisfactory reasons for this cultural phenomenon. See also MITSANI, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 95. M. ACHEIMASTOU-POTAMIANOU, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ στὰ νησιὰ τοῦ Αἰγαίου κατὰ τὸ 13ο αἰώνα. Ἡ περίπτωση τῆς Ρόδου καὶ τῆς Νάξου, in: *Ἡ Βυζαντινὴ τέχνη μετὰ τὴν Τέταρτη Σταυροφορία. Ἡ Τέταρτη Σταυροφορία καὶ οἱ ἐπιπτώσεις της. Διεθνὲς Συνέδριο, Ἀκαδημία Ἀθηνῶν 9-12 Μαρτίου 2004*, ed. by P. L. VOCOTOPOULOS, Athens 2007, 13-30, esp. 14 and footnote 2.

and abruptly disappeared in the beginning of fourteenth century[11]. During this period in a number of small churches on Naxos, especially at the Naxian Tragaia valley, there were renovations of earlier frescoes from the iconoclast era[12], which were replaced by new layers[13]. This continuity indicates that the island preserved its distinct character[14] throughout succeeding historical periods, due to its particular physical characteristics and its important strategic position within the "Island World" [15] during the medieval times, in the centre of the south Aegean Sea and on the vital maritime route linking the Mediterranean with Constantinople. Besides, at the same time a number of new small churches were constructed in the interior of the island, and they were enriched with new

11. Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 99-100. Ch. Pennas, Βυζαντινή παράδοση και τοπική κοινωνία στην έδρα του Δουκάτου της Νάξου: Η μαρτυρία των μνημείων, in: *Το Δουκάτο του Αιγαίου. Πρακτικά Επιστημονικής Συνάντησης (Νάξος-Αθήνα 2007)*, ed. by N. Moschonàs and M.-G. Lily Stylianoudi [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. International Symposium 20/ Academy of Athens. Research Centre of Greek Society. Publications 12], Athens 2009, 149-185, esp. 149-150, 154.

12. Here I mean the churches with aniconic wall paintings from the iconoclast period indicating the strong presence of the imperial authority over the Aegean in the framework of the maritime re-organization of the time. See my remarks in the recent article: Crete and the Formation of the Isaurian Naval Administrative Network, *Graeco-arabica* 12 (2017), 97-128, here at 121-122.

For the churches from the iconoclast period on Naxos, see the work by Kl. Aslanidis, *Βυζαντινή ναοδομία στη Νάξο: η μετεξέλιξη από την παλαιοχριστιανική στη μεσοβυζαντινή αρχιτεκτονική* (PhD thesis, University of Patras), Patras 2014, 63, 89, 94, 100, 103, 107, 121, 125, 128, 131, 135, 141, 144, 154, 161, 165, 168, 172, 189. See also J. Crow and S. Turner, L'archéologie des églises aniconiques de Naxos, in: *L'aniconisme dans l'art religieux byzantin. Actes du colloque de Genève (1-3 octobre 2009)*, ed. by M. Campagnolo, P. Magdalino, M. Martiniani-Reber and A.-L. Rey, Geneva 2014, 193-203. Field archaeologists discussed the issue of Byzantine Naxos at a Round Table that took place in the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade (22-27 August 2016) entitled *Byzantine Naxos in the Light of Recent Research.*

13. Description of the wall paintings by Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 95-96. See also Acheimastou-Potamianou, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 14-20.

14. For the development of the historic landscape throughout the history of Naxos, see J. Crow, S. Turner and A. K. Vionis, Characterizing the Historic Landscapes of Naxos, *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 24/1 (2011), 111-137, esp. 118.

15. D. Jacoby, The Eastern Mediterranean in the Later Middle Ages: An Island World?, in: *Byzantines, Latins and Turks in the Eastern Mediterranean World after 1150*, ed. by J. Harris, C. Holmes and E. Russell, Oxford 2012, 93-117, esp. 95-96, 100-103.

wall paintings of unequal quality[16], in some cases of high artistic level[17]. The frescoes displayed their own particular content, which reflects a most insistent religious language stemming from the orthodox tradition[18], while also depicting the spiritual requirements of the churches' donors. In some cases these cultural characteristics indicate the existence of well-educated and skilled practitioners of art[19] who, beyond their clear expression of piety, had complete awareness of the final cultural and spiritual outcome they had created. Furthermore, the painters were absolutely certain about the visual appearance of Byzantine military officers, where necessary to make such depictions[20], whereas, as stated by the archaeologists who studied these monuments, the Latin element is not visible in Naxian artistic works of the time[21].

The above set of circumstances and the political situation which prevailed in Byzantium during the second half of the fourteenth century suggest that at this given historical moment something strange and remarkably unusual happened on the island, without precedent or later occurrences. As narrative sources from this period scarcely refer to the island of Naxos, we are fortunate to have at our disposal sufficient epigraphic and archaeological testimony, which provides clues as to the political and social situation on the island, in particular for its interior, out of which this material originates.

It is on the basis of these data that I formulated a hypothesis about what may have happened on Naxos at the time[22]. I attempted to decipher the question regarding the appearance of this impressive and short-lived cultural

16. Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 96, 106. A list with the Naxian churches of the time in Pennas, Βυζαντινή παράδοση (as in footnote 11), 169-170.

17. Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 101, 105-107. Acheimastou-Potamianou, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 15.

18. Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 117. M. Panayotidi, Οι τοιχογραφίες του Αγίου Γεωργίου Λαθρήνου στη Νάξο, *ΔΧΑΕ* 16 (1991-1992), 139-154, here at 148. See also Ch. Constantinidi, *Ὁ Μελισμός. Οἱ Συλλειτουργοῦντες Ἱεράρχες καὶ οἱ Ἄγγελοι-Διάκονοι μπροστὰ στὴν Ἁγία Τράπεζα μὲ τὰ Τίμια Δῶρα ἢ τὸν Εὐχαριστιακὸ Χριστὸ* [Byzantine Monuments 14], Thessaloniki 2008, 60-63.

19. Acheimastou-Potamianou, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 15-16.

20. *Ibidem*, 20.

21. Mitsani, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 117-118.

22. E. Kountoura Galaki, Decoding Byzantine Churches on Naxos in the Early Palaiologan Period: Motivations and Inevitable Necessities, in: *"Pour une poétique de Byzance". Hommage à Vassilis Katsaros*, ed. by St. Efthymiadis, Ch. Messis, P. Odorico and I. Polemis [Dossiers byzantins 16], Paris 2015, 141-163.

and spiritual phenomenon in connection with the turbulent years of the reign of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1261-1282), who had recently recovered Constantinople from the Latins.

Thus, I should first point out that the massive appearance of military saints on a number of contemporary Naxian frescoes[23] coincided with the efforts of the first Palaiologan emperor to reinstall Byzantine authority over the central Aegean and the subsequent success of the Byzantine fleet which partly regained control there[24]. It was a successful activity, which was well illustrated not only by the emperor himself[25] and the court orator Manuel Holobolos, who praised the imperial deeds in his orations[26], but also by George Pachymeres. The contemporary historian, despite continuously taking a severe critical

23. MITSANI, Μνημειακή ζωγραφική, 96, 97, 98, 99.

24. KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Decoding, 146, 150.

25. In the autobiographical parts of the *Typikon* of the Monastery of St Demetrios in Constantinople, among other achievements, the emperor was proud of the new conditions of safety and security that finally prevailed on the Aegean islands due to the dynamic presence of Byzantine triremes there during his reign: *τριήρεις εἰς τὸν Αἰγαῖον, ὅσας οὐ πολλῶν ἐτῶν ἐδέξατο σχεδὸν ἐμβαλόντες, καὶ τοῦτο μὲν τὰς ὑπ' αὐτῶν τυραννουμένας τῆς τυραννίδος ἀνήκαμεν νήσους, τοῦτο δὲ καὶ τοῖς δι' αὐτοῦ τοῦ πελάγους ὁπουδήποτε κομιζομένοις ἀσφάλειαν παρεσκευάσαμεν*: ed. H. GRÉGOIRE, Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi de vita sua, *Byz* 29-30 (1959-1960), 447-476, esp. 457; Engl. transl. by G. DENNIS, Kellibara I: Typikon of Michael VIII Palaiologos for the Monastery of St Demetrios of the Palaiologoi –Kellibara in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 2, no. 38, 1237-1253, here at 1245. Cf. the view arguing that "the main concern of the Byzantines was to snuff out pirate nests": ANGOLD, Michael VIII Palaiologos (as in footnote 8), 39.

26. Manuel Holobolos, *Τοῦ σοφωτάτου καὶ ῥητορικωτάτου ῥήτορος τῶν ῥητόρων κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Ὁλοβώλου Λόγος εἰς τὸν κραταιὸν καὶ αὐθέντην καὶ βασιλέα κυρὸν Μιχαὴλ τὸν Παλαιολόγον καὶ Νέον Κωνσταντῖνον κατὰ τὴν ἑορτὴν ἀναγνωσθεὶς τῆς Χριστοῦ γεννήσεως*, Λόγος II (ed. M. TREU, *Manuelis Holoboli Orationes* [Programm des königlichen Victoria Gymnasiums zu Potsdam 2], Potsdam 1906-1907, 51-77), 54. For his rhetorical works hailing the emperor, see L. PREVIALE, Un Panegirico inedito per Michele VIII Paleologo, *BZ* 42 (1943/49), 1-49; R. MACRIDES, The New Constantine and the New Constantinople–1261? *BMGS* 6 (1980) 13-41; D. ANGELOV, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*, Cambridge 2007, 44-45. Even so, in some literary works there are clues for veiled disapproval against the same emperor, see E. KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Ideological Conflicts in Veiled Language as Seen by the Palaiologan Hagiographers. The Lives of St. Theodosia as a Case Study, in: *Byzantine Hagiography: Texts, Themes and Projects*, ed. by A. RIGO, M. TRIZIO and E. DESPOTAKIS [Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization 13], Turnhout 2018, 401-418; E. KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Rewriting on the Martyrs of the Iconoclast Period during the Palaiologan Era (forthcoming).

stand against Michael VIII's regime, described with pride the emperor's naval policy and reported that Naxos was among "the conquered islands which were immediately equipped with garrisons and being previously subject to the Latins, they passed into the possessions of the Romans"[27]. The Byzantines possibly recaptured a part of the island from the Venetians at the time and installed soldiers on garrison duty.

Second, I should underline that some frescoes with fully orthodox content could be closely related with people from Constantinople who might have been settled as exiles on Naxos[28]. Having expressed their opposition to the unionist policy of the first Palaiologan emperor, the emperor's adversaries were convicted of treason, their properties were confiscated and finally they were compelled to depart from the Byzantine capital[29]. According to Pachymeres, a number of them, especially members of the clergy, were forced to seek the difficult path of exile across the Aegean islands[30].

---

27. Georges Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* (ed. A. FAILLER, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations Historiques* [CFHB 24/1-5], vols I-V, Paris 1984-2000 = Pachymeres, *History*), III.15: vol. I, 271.13-19.

28. See KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Decoding (as in footnote 22), 161-163.

I am glad that my viewpoint and the relevant novel ideas on Palaiologan Naxos found acceptance among new researchers, even when not wholly understood: N. ZARAS, Identity and Patronage in Byzantium: Epigraphic Evidence and Donor Portraits of Naxos, in: *Inscriptions in the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art. Proceedings of the International Symposium "Inscriptions: Their Contribution to the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine History and History of Art" (Ioannina, June 26-27, 2015)*, ed. by CHR. STAVRAKOS, Wiesbaden 2016, 53-78.

For a different interpretation of the cultural phenomenon on Naxos, attributing it to the isolation of the rural population of Naxos in the hinterland after the Frankish conquest, who rallied around the priests and continued to remain attached to the Byzantine tradition, without however any explanation about its temporary aspect: CHR. MALTEZOU, Ὁ Περικλῆς Ζερλέντης καὶ ἡ ἔρευνα τῆς ἱστορίας τῆς μεσαιωνικῆς Νάξου, *Φλέα* 49/1 (2016), 8-22, esp. 19.

29. For the Byzantine reaction to the unionist policy, see H. EVERT-KAPPESOVA, La société byzantine et l'Union de Lyon, *BSl* 10 (1949), 28-41; D. J. GEANAKOPLOS, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258-1282. A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations*, Cambridge, Mass. 1959, 264-273; and D. NICOL, The Greeks and the Union of the Churches: The Report of Ogerius, Protonotarius of Michael VIII Palaiologos, in 1280, *Proccedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 63/1 (1962), 1-16 esp. 9-11 (= IDEM, *Byzantium: Its Ecclesiastical History and Relations with the Western World* [Variorum Reprints], London 1972, VII).

30. *Ἡτοιμάζοντο δὲ καὶ φορτίδες τοῦ ἐξορίζεσθαι τοὺς ἤδη κατακρίτους δοκοῦντας ... τοὺς μὲν εἰς Λῆμνον, τοὺς δ' ἐς Σκῦρον, ἄλλους δ' ἐς Κέω ... περιορίζεσθαι*: Pachymeres,

This cultural movement, in which elements of censure against the central power can be detected[31], lasted just one generation: apparently it stopped when this generation of the Constantinopolitan exiles on Naxos left or passed away and therefore this cultural and spiritual activity on the island came to an end. The next Byzantine generation of Constantinopolitan origin, if still on the island, did not follow this activity as far as one can discern: either due to lack of technical knowledge, or because of political and religious changes in Constantinople which also made a difference on Naxos: the son and successor of Michael VIII, emperor Andronikos II (1282-1328), neglected military operations at sea, abandoned the islands[32] and on the other hand restored the orthodox dogma by abolishing the Union of the Churches[33]. Following these political developments, the Byzantine navy had grown too weak to impose Byzantine authority on the Aegean, including Naxos, and therefore Latin rule was reestablished on a permanent basis in the years that followed[34]. Besides, from the religious perspective, there was no trouble concerning the active promotion of Orthodoxy in Constantinople. In any case, the discontinuity of this cultural phenomenon is obvious since its last testimony is dated to the first half of the fourteenth century[35].

History, V.19: vol. II, 499.31-501.3; *Τινὰς δὲ καὶ τῶν μοναχῶν, οἳ δὴ κἀκείνῳ προσέκειντο, ἄλλον μὲν ἀλλαχοῦ ἐξορίζει καὶ νήσοις ταῖς κατ' Αἰγαῖον περιορίζει*: *ibidem*, V.29: vol. II, 533.31-535.1. See T. M. KOLBABA, Repercussions of the Second Council of Lyon (1274): Theological Polemic and the Boundaries of Orthodoxy, in: *Greeks, Latins, and Intellectual History 1204-1500*, ed. by M. HINTERBERGER and CHR. SCHABEL [Bibliotheca 11], Leuven-Paris-Walpole, Ma 2011, 43-68, here at 54-55.

The islands had always been used as a place of political exile: É. MALAMUT, *Les îles de l'Empire byzantin VIIIe-XIIe siècles* [Byzantina Sorbonensia 8], vol. I, Paris 1988, 175-178.

31. An illustrative example is the ironic use of the term "philanthropos" (= merciful) to censure the emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos: KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Decoding (as in footnote 22), 158-162.

32. Pachymeres, *History*, VII.26: vol. III, 81.19-83.19. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἱστορία* (ed. L. SCHOPEN, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia* [CSHB], vols. I-III, Bonn 1829-1855 = Gregoras, *Roman History*), vol. I, 209.1-8. Recalling the ancient naval glory of Byzantium, Gregoras in the above passage stressed that if the Byzantines had not abandoned their fleet "the Turks could never had seen the sand of the sea".

33. Pachymeres, *History*, VII.2: vol. III, 23.3-7. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 159.23-160.6.

34. SAINT-GUILLAIN, Les conquérants de l'archipel (as in footnote 7), 146-147.

35. According to the published inscriptions: KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 86-91, 109, 117 and more recently: A. MITSANI, Ἡ χορηγία στὶς Κυκλάδες ἀπὸ τὸν 60

Looking again over this particularly interesting movement, this article seeks to explore it further with a regard to the Naxian women[36], by focusing on the epigraphic material, which often accompany the mural paintings. Despite the ravages of time, a sufficient number of inscriptions have survived, allowing us to attain a better understanding on Palaiologan Naxos through these "visual documents"[37], which offer sometimes "unexpected messages about their surroundings"[38].

The first known inscription from the period under discussion mentioning a female name comes from the church of St Nicholas at Sangri[39] dated to 1269/70. The lady in question was Eirene, the spouse of the donor who sponsored the paintings and was a reader (*ἀναγνώστης*[40]); his name however has not survived:

> *[Ἱ]στορίθει ὁ θεῖος κ[(αὶ) πά]νσεπτος ναὸς τοῦ ὁσίο[υ Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Νικολάου]* ..... *[ἀναγνώ]στου κ(αὶ) τῆς συνβίου αὐτοῦ Εἰρίνης + ἔτος ,ϛΨΟΗ΄ (ἰ)νδ(ικτιῶνος) ΙΓ΄*[41]

In the church of Theotokos in Demos at Apeiranthos, now in ruins, there was a supplicant inscription dated to 1280/1, revealing the name and surname of the donors: Demetrios and Eirene Mavrika. There is no mention as to their profession, social standing, or other qualification, only a very emotional invocation, which unveils their concerns about their salvation:

μέχρι τὸν 14ο αἰώνα. Ἡ μαρτυρία τῶν ἐπιγραφῶν, *ΕΕΒΣ* 52 (2006), 391-446 (= Mitsani, Χορηγία), esp. 422-430.

36. For women's ordinary life in rural landscapes, see Sh. E. J. Gerstel, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium. Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*, New York 2015, 93-100.

37. See above footnote 6.

38. An insightful observation by A. Rhoby, The Meaning (as in footnote 1), 732.

39. Its name is a corruption of Saint Croix that is the French name of the neighbouring monastery of Timios Stavros: N. Zias, Ἅγιος Νικόλαος στὸ Σαγκρί, in: *Naxos* (as in footnote 11), 80-83, esp. 80. See also Ph. Drossoyianni, A "Palimpsest" Wall and Related Paintings at Naxos, in: *Θωράκιον. Αφιέρωμα στη μνήμη του Παύλου Λαζαρίδη*, Athens 2004, 341-354.

40. P. M[agdalino], s.v., *ODB*, vol., I, 84.

41. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 422-423. See also G. Dimitrokallis, Χρονολογημένες βυζαντινὲς ἐπιγραφὲς τοῦ ΙΓ΄καὶ ΙΔ΄ αἰώνα ἀπὸ τὴ Νάξο, *Ἐπιθεώρηση Τέχνης* 90 (1962), 706-711 = Idem, *Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν μελέτην τῶν βυζαντινῶν μνημείων τῆς Νάξου*, Athens 1972, 13-25, here at 21. Zias, Ἅγιος Νικόλαος στὸ Σαγκρί (as in footnote 39), 80. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 86-87.

Δ[έησις τ]οῦ δούλου τοῦ Θ(εο)ῦ Δη / μη[τρίου] τοῦ Μάβρικ[α] κ(αὶ) τῆς / συμ[βίου] αὐτοῦ Εἰρήνης ψυχικὴ / σ[ω]τηρία· κ(αὶ) εἰ τὶς ἱερεὺς ἱερου / ρ[γεῖ] εἰς τὸ ναὸν τοῦτον μνήσ / θῆ διὰ ἐμ(ᾶς) διὰ τὸν Κ(ύριο)ν / ἔτους ,ζψπθ΄ (6789=1280/1)[42]

Earlier scholars who studied this building and its frescoes' remains *in situ* characterized their art as an outstanding. The same scholars also discerned a figure portraying a boy considered to be the son of the couple mentioned in the above inscription[43]. If this hypothesis is correct, we could imagine that the whole family was pictured there, although there is no written reference to the boy in the inscription[44]. As regards the family name, Mavrikas / Mavrix[45], it was not unknown in the Byzantine society, dating back to the eleventh century. As stated by Byzantine and Latin sources[46] of the eleventh century, it belonged to a wealthy family of Pontus with connections to the central power of Constantinople and involvement in naval offices, although nothing is known about the fate of its members in later times.

In the church of Panagia at Archatos several inscriptions are preserved, of which only two are published. They are found on either side of the figure of St John the Baptist, who is depicted on the eastern wall in a conch on the

42. A. Katsouros, Τοπωνύμια τῆς Νάξου, *Ναξιακὸν Ἀρχεῖον* 1 (1947), 79. nr 6. Dimitrokallis, Χρονολογημένες βυζαντινὲς ἐπιγραφὲς (as in footnote 41), 22. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 109. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 423.

43. K. D. Kalokyres, Ἔρευναι χριστιανικῶν μνημείων εἰς τὰς νήσους Νάξον, Ἀμοργὸν καὶ Λέσβον, *Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἐπετηρὶς τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Πανεπ. Ἀθηνῶν* 14 (1963), 487-522, here at 500. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 109.

44. In the south chapel attached to the same church, there are also isolated fragments of an unpublished inscription: Mitsani, Χορηγία, 423.

45. See *PLP* 17421.

46. A seal dated to 1062-1064 belongs to Michael Mavrika: J. Nesbitt and N. Oikonomides, *Catalogue of Byzantine Seals at Dumbarton Oaks and in the Fogg Museum of Art*, vol. 2, Washington, D. C. 1994, 41.6: *[Κ(ύρι)]ε [β(οή)θ(ει) Μ]ιχαὴ[λ β]έστη κα[ὶ] στρατηγ(ῷ) τῆς Χήου τ(ῷ) Μαυρηκ(ᾷ)*. Another one dated to 1071-1077 perhaps belonged to another or the same Michael Mavrika: *ibidem*, vol. 4, Washington, D. C. 2001, 1.6: *[Κύριε βοήθει Μιχαὴλ πρ]οέδρ(ῳ) (καὶ) [δου]κὶ τῶν Βου[κε]λαρ(ίων) τῷ Μαυρικ(ᾷ)*. See also W. Seibt, *Die byzantinischen Bleisiegel in Österreich* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik, II/1], vol. 1, Vienna 1978, no 58. See also B. Skoulatos, *Les personnages byzantins de l'Alexiade. Analyse prosopographique et synthèse* [Recueil de travaux d'histoire et de philologie / Université de Louvain, 6e sér., fasc. 20], Louvain-la-Neuve1980, 196-198.

north antenna of the cross-shaped temple[47]. The unusual label accompanying the figure of St John Ὁ ρυγοδώ/κτης (= the one who eliminates shivering/convulsion) is noteworthy. Popular belief usually attributed this feature to the saint, as St John the Baptist was credited with healing people suffering from shivering/convulsions[48], a symptom that often goes together with malarial fever[49]. Such a reference could be an indication of malaria appearing locally at the time, in response to which people appealed for cure to St John the Baptist.

The first supplicant inscription in the same church cites Michael[50] the priest who had painted the second layer of frescoes and was also one of the donors. Richos Charchazanes and his wife Anna were also mentioned in the same painted inscription:

> *ἔτους, ϛψϟδ΄ ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) ιδ΄. / μην(ὶ) Σεπτ(εμβρίῳ) α΄ δέ(ησι)ς τοῦ δού[λου] τοῦ / Θ(εο)ῦ Μιχα(ὴ)λ ἱερέ(ω)ς τοῦ ζῶ / γράφου / Ρήχου: τοῦ Χαρχαζάνη[51]: / (καὶ) τ(ῆς) συμβίου αὐτοῦ Ἄνης[52]*

The second supplicant inscription found on the right side of St John's figure makes mention of two more donors, John Charzae, who bore the same name with the nearby depicted saint, and his wife Evgenou, suggesting a collective contribution for the decoration of this church.

> *Δέ(ησι)ς Ἰω(άνν)ου τοῦ Χάρζαη / (καὶ) τ(ῆς) σιμβίου αὐτοῦ / Εὐγενοῦς:[53]*

Some observations on the above quoted family names give us a clue as to the origins of the donors. The family names Charchazanes and Charzae clearly belong to two different families. However, it seems that these family names are

---

47. Dimitrokallis, Χρονολογημένες βυζαντινὲς ἐπιγραφὲς (as in footnote 41), 22. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 87. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 424.

48. It was believed that St John's body shivered after his beheading; hence, according to popular tradition, the saint healed the shiver: D. B. Oikonomides, Ἰωάννης ὁ Πρόδρομος (Λαογραφία), in: *Θρησκευτικὴ καὶ Ἠθικὴ Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία*, vol. 6, Athens 1965, 1127-1131, here at 1130.

49. Cf. D. Ch. Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine Empire: A Systematic Survey of Subsistence Crises and Epidemics* [Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs 9], Aldershot 2004, 101-102.

50. *PLP* 19058.

51. *PLP* 30706.

52. See above, footnote 47.

53. See above, footnote 47.

related from a linguistic point of view, presenting a variation with common linguistic features[54]. The names indicate an affinity between the two families, suggesting probably a common place of origin, which might be, for instance, the river Charzanis near Dyrrhachium mentioned by Anna Komnene[55], or the Charsianon theme[56]. Linguistic commonalities are to be found in the words *χαρζάνιον* (= stick/leather strap)[57] and *χαρζανιστός* (= impetuous)[58], of the tenth -and eleventh- century texts respectively, from which a family name could have originated. Furthermore, the above-mentioned family names recall earlier ones, such as of the noble Armenian family of the Patriarch of Constantinople John the Grammatikos (837-843) (*τῆς τῶν Μωροχαρζανίων γενεᾶς*)[59], or the Charzanites family known since the ninth and tenth centuries[60]. The name of the monk George of Charzana (*Γεώργιος μοναχὸς ὁ ἐπιλεγόμενος τοῦ Χαρζανᾶ*), mentioned in an Athonite document of the year 1024[61], also seems to belong to

54. As proposed also in *PLP* 30706, 30628.

55. Anna Komnene, *Ἀλεξιάς* (ed. D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias* [CFHB 40/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 2001), XIII.7.6: vol. I, 399.20-22.

56. *Φιλοπόνημα Κωνσταντίνου βασιλέως υἱοῦ Λέοντος περὶ τῶν θεμάτων τῶν ἀνηκόντων τῇ βασιλείᾳ τῶν Ῥωμαίων* (ed. A. Pertusi, *Costantino Porfirogenito De thematibus. Introduzione, testo critico, commento* [Studi e testi 160], Città del Vaticano 1952), 65.45-47. According to another view the name Charsianites may refer to a leather-merchant or leather-worker: J. Haldon, *A Critical Commentary on the Taktika of Leo VI* [DOS 44], Washington, D. C. 2014, 207.

57. *Λέοντος ἐν Χριστῷ αὐτοκράτορος τῶν ἐν πολέμοις τακτικῶν σύντομος παράδοσις* (ed. G. Dennis, *The Taktika of Leo VI. Text, Translation and Commentary* [CFHB 49/DOT 12], Washington, D. C. 2010), Constitutio 7.80, 110.

58. *Εὐσταθίου πρός τινα Μανουὴλ προσφιλέστατον αὐτοῦ δέκα λόγοι περὶ τοῦ Διγενοῦς Ἀκρίτου καὶ τῶν γονέων* (ed. E. Trapp, *Digenes Akrites. Synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen* [WBS 8], Vienna 1971), E501/G2883. For the meaning and the types of these specific words in the epic tale of Digenes Akrites, see St. Xanthoudides, Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτας κατὰ τὸ χειρόγραφον Ἐσκωριάλ, *Χριστιανικὴ Κρήτη* 1 (1912), 527-571, here at 553.

59. John Skylitzes, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν* (ed. I. Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* [CFHB 5], Berlin–New York 1973), 84.93. He was born in Constantinople of Armenian origin. His family name is preserved in different variations; see the apparatus criticus in Theophanes Continuatus, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. J. M. Featherstone and J. Signes-Codoñer, *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur libri I-IV* [CFHB 53], Boston–Berlin 2015), 220, §6.24–29. See also *PmbZ*/1, 3199.

60. *PmbZ*/1, 1067; *PmbZ*/2, 21235, 21236.

61. *Actes de Lavra I. Des origines à 1204*, ed. P. Lemerle, A. Guillou, D. Papachryssanthou and N. Svoronos [Archives de l'Athos 5], Paris 1970, no. 25, line 2-3. *PmbZ*/2, 22256.

the same group of names. Another corresponding case suggesting a linguistic parallel with the Naxian family names is the Charsianeites monastery which was established later in the Byzantine capital at an unknown location in the mid of fourteenth century by the wealthy and noble John Charsianeites[62]. The above examples indicate that the family names cited in the Naxos inscriptions of the church of Panagia at Archatos, despite their variations, present a firm line of continuity with earlier names, which were not unusual in the Byzantine space[63]. However, they seem not to have any relevance or connection with the insular society of Naxos.

Two more inscriptions are to be found in a small church of Naxos, in St George at Oskelos/Noskelos, dated to 1285/6. One of them, written in four rows, is of interest for the present research, because it records the wife of the priest Christophoros[64] bearing the name of Plete[65], another form of Plyto (*Πλυτώ*)[66].

Δέ(ησι)ς / [τ]οῦ / [δούλου] / τ[οῦ] Θ(εο)ῦ / τοῦ π(α)π(ᾶ) / Χριστὸ / φόρου κ(αὶ) / τῆς σὺνβίου / αὐτ(οῦ) / Πλητῆς[67]

In this case, there is no mention of the family name of the donors, which is unusual in the Naxian inscriptions of the time, since in most of them the family names are recorded.

A short distance away from the Oskelos/Noskelos monument is the church of St George at Marathos, which also dates to the same time (1285/6). A dedicatory inscription recording the members of the Galates family as donors of the Bema frescoes is of particular interest for it attests the female presence within the Naxian society at the time. The actual donor mentioned in this inscription

62. *PLP* 30685. For the monastery, see R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin. Première partie: Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat œcuménique. III, Les églises et les monastères*, Paris ²1969, 501-502. See also A.-M. Talbot, Charsianeites: Testament of Patriarch Matthew I for the Monastery of Charsianeites Dedicated to the Mother of God Nea Peribleptos, in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 60, 1625-1666, here at 1625.

63. See different forms of the name in *PLP* 30674-30691.

64. *PLP* 31047.

65. Cf. *PLP* 23373, 23374. Canonical rules allow orthodox lower clergy (priests, deacons, subdeacons) to marry before accessing to priesthood, as it seems, for instance, from the Canon 3, of the Quinisext or the Council in Trullo: *Concilium Constantinopolitanum a. 691/2 in Trullo habitum (concilium Quinisextum)*, ed. H. Ohme, *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum*, Series Secunda, vol. II, Pars 4, Berlin–New York 2013, 25-26.

66. *PLP* 16860.

67. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 424-425. See also Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 88.

is Maria Galatou. She bears a common family name encountered either as a personal or a family name, not only in the Late Byzantine period[68], but also in earlier times[69] and in different types. Reflecting the prominent position of the widow in the Byzantine society, Maria Galatou[70] appears at the head of the list of the donors and then the other members of her family follow: her descendants Galates and Michael, their wives and their children. Only one name of Maria Galatou's female relatives is visible, Anna the wife of Michael Galates:

> + *Ἱστορίθει τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἅγιον Βῆμα* [..... κ]*όπων Μαρί*(*ας*) *τῆς Γα*/
> *λατοῦ κ*(*αὶ*) *τέκνου αὐτῆς Γαλάτ*(*η*) *Κ*(*αὶ*) *τῆς συμβίου αὐτοῦ*
> [..... *καὶ τ*]*οῦ υἱοῦ αὐτῆς Μιχ*(*αὴλ*) *τοῦ Γαλάτ*(*η*) / *κ*(*αὶ*) *τῆς συμβίου*
> *αὐτ*(*οῦ*) *Ἄννη*(*ς*) *κ*(*αὶ*) *τ*(*ῶν*) *τέκνων αὐτ*(*ῶν*), / *μηνὶ μ*[*αΐῳ*.....]
> *Ἔ*[*τους*] ,*ϛ*[*Ψϟ*]*Δ κ*(*αὶ*) *ὁ Θ*(*εὸ*)*ς σώσ*(*ει*) *ἡμ*(*ᾶς*)[71]

The present inscription illustrates a family undertaking to decorate the church, led by a widow, who could dispose her property and revenues (*κόπων*) according to her own priorities[72]. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the donors are registered by families, indicating the importance the nuclear family had acquired in the insular society regardless of the gender. After the death of the spouse the family's leadership passed to the widow, who thus gained control of her family's fortunes[73]. The position of the widow was not regarded as a female promotion in the society, but as a kind of replacement, since the widow reassumed the deceased husband's responsibilities and duties towards family and society.

In the small church of St George at Distomo of Philoti there is a written inscription dated to 1286/87. Here the male donor bears the name of Nicholas

---

68. Cf. *PLP* 93304, 3498, 3499, 91588.

69. Galatios: *PmbZ*/1, 1926, 1927. Galaton: *PmbZ*/1,1928, 1929.

70. See Sh. E. J. Gerstel and S. Kalopissi-Verti, Female Church Founders: The Agency of the Village Widow in Late Byzantium, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 5), 195-211, here at 204.

71. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 425.

72. A. E. Laiou, Marriage Prohibitions, Marriage Strategies and the Dowry in Thirteenth-century Byzantium, in: *La transmission du patrimoine: Byzance et l'aire méditerranéenne*, ed. by J. Beaucamp and G. Dagron [Collège de France - CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 11], Paris 1998, 129-160 esp. 137-138 (= A. E. Laiou, *Women, Family and Society in Byzantium*, ed. by C. Morrisson and R. Dorin [Variorum Reprints], Farnham-Burlington 2011, II).

73. For the position of widows in the Byzantine society, see below, 183-184.

Strobiliates, but his wife and children are not referred to by their names, which is quite unusual in the Naxos inscriptions of the period. The donor's name indicates a possible origin from Strobilos, a fortress and port in southwestern Asia Minor[74].

Δέ(ησις) τοῦ δού(λου) / [τ]οῦ Θ(εο)ῦ Νι / κολάου / τοῦ Στροβιλιατι / (καὶ) τῆς συμβί[ου] αὐτ(οῦ) / [καὶ] τ(ῶν) τέκνων αὐτοῦ / [ἔτους ,ζψ]ϛε´ ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) ιε´[75]

In another small church, the so-called Panagia stes Yiallous, the female involvement in patronage activity is much in evidence. The small monument's last layer of frescoes belongs to the years 1288/89 according to epigraphic testimony[76] and contains short inscriptions, written carefully and calligraphically. In each of them five female names are preserved.

The names of Maria and her husband's George Pediasimos[77] are visible in the first supplicant inscription written in two rows:

Δέ(ησις) τοῦ δού(λου) τοῦ Θ(εο)ῦ / Γεώργιου τοῦ Πεδιάσημ(ου) / καὶ τῆς συμβίου / αὐτοῦ Μαρίας (καὶ) τῶν τέ / κνων αὐτῶν[78]

The family name Pediasimos is known from the tenth century through a high-ranking officer who was active in Thessaloniki[79]. Particularly during the thirteenth century Pediasimos' family enumerated eminent members of high rank with the most famous representative being John Pothos Pediasimos (*ὕπατος τῶν φιλοσόφων*). His removal from Thessaloniki and his subsequent establishment in Ochrida with the office of chartophylax is considered to have been equivalent to exile and was connected with the aftermath of the Council of Lyons (1274)[80]. Similarly his contemporary George Pediasimos cited in the

74. For the toponym Strobilos, see CL. Foss, Strobilos and Related Sites, *Anatolian Studies* 38 (1988), 147-174 (= IDEM, *History and Archaeology of Byzantine Asia Minor* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1990, XII).

75. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 88-89. MITSANI, Χορηγία, 425-426. See also *PLP* 94551 without reference to the inscription.

76. N. DRANDAKIS, Αἱ τοιχογραφίαι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Νάξου "Παναγία στῆς Γιαλλοῦς" (1288/89), *ΕΕΒΣ* 33 (1964) 258-269. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 89-90. MITSANI, Χορηγία, 426-427.

77. *PLP* 22233.

78. MITSANI, Χορηγία, 426. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 88-89.

79. *PmbZ/2*, 26401.

80. C. N. CONSTANTINIDES, *Higher Education in Byzantium in the Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries (1204-ca 1310)* [Texts and Studies of the History of Cyprus 11],

aforementioned Naxian inscription and bearing the same family name was possibly a relative of his. He could also have been exiled to the island for the same reason.

The female donor Kali Chionou[81] appears alone in another inscription of the same church without reference to other family members. She was probably a widow without children, bearing a rather usual Byzantine first name[82], whereas her family name in the male form Chionis/Chionas was quite popular either as a personal[83] or as a family name[84]:

Δέ(ησις) Καλῆς τῆς Χηώνου[85]

In a different inscription within the same collective patronage the name of Leontou is visible. She was the wife of Michael Triakita(?):

Δέ(ησις) Μ(ι)χα(ὴλ) / τοῦ Τρ(?)ιάκητα (καὶ) τῆς συμβίου Λεοντοῦς[86]

The name Leonto is the female form of the male name Leontios, quite often found in the Byzantine sources[87], but the family name *Τρ(?)ιάκητα/ Ριάκητα(?)* cannot be read with precision. A way of understanding this name is to view it through the family name Triadites and Triodites[88] or in conjuction with the toponym Triaditsa, the Slavic name of Sardike[89] (today Sofia). In the second case we could envisage a Slavic origin of this family.

The name of Maria, George Kalapodi's wife is visible in another short inscription of the same small monument:

Nicosia 1982, 124-125. I. Pérez-Martín, L'écriture de l'hypatos Jean Pothos Pédiasimos d'après ses scholies aux Elementa d'Euclide, *Scriptorium* 64 (2010), 109-119, here at 111-112. See also *PLP* 22235.

81. *PLP* 30823.

82. *PLP* 28169, 93691, 93692, 10311-10313.

83. *PLP* 30824-30832.

84. See *PLP* 30805-30812, 30823.

85. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 89. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 426.

86. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 89. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 426. See also Gerstel, *Rural Lives* (as in footnote 36), 111-112.

87. See the references in the *PmbZ*/1, 4605, 24733, 24734, 24735.

88. *PLP* 29328, 29327.

89. *ἡ Σαρδική, ἣ νῦν Τριαδίτζα ὀνομάζεται*: Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. van Dieten, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin-New York 1975), vol. I, 100.51-52.

Δέ(ησις) / Γεώρ / γίου τοῦ Κα / λαπόδι: (καὶ) τῆς σ(ειν) / βίου αὐτοῦ Μαρί(ας)[90]

This family name possibly derives from the word "kalapodion" (shoe-tree) and may be connected to a professional activity related to a shoe-maker[91].

The last survived inscription from the same church, Panagia stes Yiallous, mentions Anna with the unknown from other sources family name Koutenou[92]. She was probably a widow[93] and appears with her son Epiphanios in this inscription, which points to her significant position in society:

Δέ(ησις) Ἄννας / τ(ῆς) Κουτη / νοῦ (καὶ) τέ / κνου αὐτῆς / Ἐπίφανιου[94]

In this church the so-called Panagia stes Yiallous we do not encounter representatives from the clergy participating in the decoration of the church, as patronage was carried out collectively[95] by laypersons.

In the church of St George at Lathreno another woman, whose name is not mentioned, is referred to together with her husband Michael Tsykalopoulos[96], in a supplicant inscription. They were probably the donors of this striking decoration in part or as a whole:

---

90. *PLP* 10273. Drandakis, Αἱ τοιχογραφίαι (as in footnote 76), 262. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 89. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 426-427.

91. As it is vividly described by Theodoros Prodromos: *γείτοναν ἔχω ... τάχα ψευδοταγγάρην, ... ὅταν δὲ πάλιν, δέσποτα, γεύματος ὥρα φθάσῃ, ῥίπτει τὸ καλαπόδιν του: Στίχοι Θεοδώρου τοῦ Πτωχοπροδρόμου πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα κὺρ Μανουὴλ τὸν Κομνηνόν* (ed. H. Eideneier, *Ptochoprodromos. Einführung, kritische Ausgabe, deutsche Übersetzung, Glossar* [Neograeca Medii Aevi 5], Cologne 1991), III.112-125: 122-123.

92. *PLP* 13641.

93. See Gerstel and Kalopissi-Verti, Female Church Founders (as in footnote 70), 207-208.

94. Drandakis, Αἱ τοιχογραφίαι (as in footnote 76), 263. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 89. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 426-427.

95. S. Kalopissi-Verti, Collective Patterns of Patronage in the Late Byzantine Village: The Evidence of Church Inscriptions, in: *Donation et donateurs dans le monde byzantine. Actes du colloque international de l'Université de Fribourg 13-15 mars 2008*, ed. by J.-M. Spieser and É. Yota [Réalités byzantines 14], Paris 2012, 125-140, esp. 133. See also M. Georgopoulou, The Landscape of Medieval Greece, in: *A Companion to Latin Greece*, ed. by N. I. Tsougarakis and P. Lock, Leiden-Boston 2015, 326-368, esp. 357-358.

96. *PLP* 29403.

Δέ[ησις] Μι[χαὴλ] τοῦ / Τσυκαλ[ο]/πούλ[ου] κ(αὶ) / τ(ῆς) συμ / βί[ου] ἔ(τους) ,ς... [ἰ]ν[δικτιῶνος][97]

The frescoes of this church are of particular interest. Some of them display a high artistic level with clear Constantinopolitan influence: they projected issues from the orthodox repertoire while underlining at the same time the ritual differences from the Latin Church[98]. Besides, there are traces of hidden patterns of *Kaiserkritik* against Michael VIII Palaiologos[99]. The wall paintings reflect the socio-economic status of the donors who are considered as a fairly rich couple, although they lived in the rural environment of the island at the time[100]. The frescoes were probably executed in the second half of the thirteenth century, although a date closer to 1275[101] is not to be excluded, as this monument presents affinities with the neighbouring church of St John at Kerami dated to *ca.*1275[102].

In the representation of Panagia in the small church of St Stephen at Tsikalario, dated to the end of the thirteenth century, there are two supplicant inscriptions written in capital letters denoting another collective donation. The donors mentioned by name are spouses bearing the names Xenos and Kali without reference to their family name:

97. Panayotidi, Οι τοιχογραφίες (as in footnote 18), 148. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 117. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 427, where the donor is connected with Basil Tzukallas, mentioned in the inscription found in the church of St Constantine at Damariona, see below footnote 109.

98. Panayotidi, Οι τοιχογραφίες (as in footnote 18), 148. A theme pertaining to the eucharistic and liturgical content, as a pure orthodox expression, the "Melismos", is included in the frescoes of the church of St George at Lathreno. This motif is often depicted in the apse of the churches of Naxos, in different types: Constantinidi, *Ὁ Μελισμὸς* (as in footnote 18), 163, 164, 175, 178, 179, 180, 181-182, 190, 194. For the wall-paintings of the church of St George at Lathreno, as samples of outstanding art, reminding Constantinopolitan origin, see the exhaustive analysis by Panayotidi, Οι τοιχογραφίες (as in footnote 18), 149-150. Constantinopolitan influence is also detected in other Naxian frescoes of the time: see N. Drandakis, Ἀρχαιολογικοὶ περίπατοι στὴ Βυζαντινὴ Νάξο, *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Κυκλαδικῶν Μελετῶν* 13 (1985-1990), 5-55 here at 46.

99. Kountoura Galaki, Decoding (as in footnote 22), 158-159.

100. Panayotidi, Οι τοιχογραφίες (as in footnote 18), 153.

101. Kountoura Galaki, Decoding (as in footnote 22), 158.

102. Constantinidi, *Ὁ Μελισμὸς* (as in footnote 18), 148, 178.

Δέ(ησις) τ(οῦ) δούλου: / τοῦ Θ(εο)ῦ Ξένου: / κ(αὶ) / τ(ῆς) συμβί / ου αὐτοῦ Καλῆς: / κ(αὶ) τ(ῶν) τέκνο [αὐ]τοῦ:[103]

The suggested names of the other married couple who contributed to the making of the wall paintings in the same church of St Stephen at Tsikalario were Karpos?[104] and Margarita:

Δέ(ησις) τοῦ δούλου τοῦ [Θεο]ῦ Κα . .ου κ(αὶ) τ(ῆς) / σηνβίου αυτου Μαργαρι - - κ(αὶ) τέ / κνω αὐ[τ]οῦ[105]

In the church of St John, "st' Aphikli" at Apeiranthos there are several inscriptions in different layers. One of them, probably dated to 1309, as indicated by similarities with other inscriptions, reports as donor Kali Philotitissa, most likely a widow, and her children. As is evident from their name, their place of residence was the nearby village of Philoti:

Δέ(ησις) / Κα / λῆς τῆς / Φιλοτί / τισας κ(αὶ) τῶν τέ / κνων / αὐτῆς[106]

In the church of St Constantine at Damariona there is another written inscription mentioning that Basil Tzukalas[107], his wife Telaza or Stelaza and their children had sponsored the decoration of the church, without, however, any report about the amount they offered[108].

[Ἱστ]ορίθησαν αἱ ἅγιε εἰ / κό[ναι] δι' ἐξόδου κὺρ Βασι / [λ]είου τοῦ Τζυκ[αλᾶ] / καὶ τῆς συμβίου αὐτοῦ Τε / λάζας κ(αὶ) τῶν τέκν(ω)ν / αὐτ(ῶν) / ἔτους ,ζωιθ΄ ἰνδ(ικτιῶνος) θ΄ μηνὶ Σεπτ(εμβρίῳ) (6819-5508=1311, 6919-5509=1310)[109].

---

103. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 117. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 427.

104. This name was proposed by N. Drandakis, Ἀρχαιολογικοὶ περίπατοι (as in footnote 98), 39.

105. Kalopissi-Verti, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 117. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 427.

106. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 428. See Gerstel and Kalopissi-Verti, Female Church Founders (as in footnote 70), 208.

107. *PmbZ/2*, 28091.

108. Such detail is rarely referred to: Kalopissi-Verti, Collective Patterns of Patronage (as in footnote 95), 129.

109. Dimitrokallis, Χρονολογημένες βυζαντινὲς ἐπιγραφὲς (as in footnote 41), 23; Idem, Ὁ ἅγιος Κωνσταντῖνος Βουρβουριᾶς Νάξου, *Ἐπετηρὶς Ἑταιρείας Κυκλαδικῶν Μελετῶν* 3 (1963), 533-552 = Idem, *Συμβολαί* (as in footnote 41), 113-134, here at 133. Mitsani, Χορηγία, 429.

The family name of the monument's commissioners is quite common[110]. It is connected with the word "tsykalin" (= cooking pot) and suggests a relevant professional activity. However, the female name Telaza or Stelaza indicates a possible foreign origin, but the fragmentary character of the data prevents a more precise perception of what such marriage and the special conditions[111] might have involved.

Looking at frescoes of Naxos and reading the inscribed/painted words in order to uncover the persons involved and especially the women mentioned there, the epigraphic material enables the reader to gain insight into the Greek society of the island at the time. In the socio-political circumstances of the period, the Byzantines living in the interior of the island had created a micro-region within Naxos that acquired two remarkably projected characteristics: emphasis on orthodox dogma and family cohesion.

The women of Naxos constitute an integral part of this artistic and cultural phenomenon. They participated in foundation, restoration or decoration of the small Naxian churches, alone as widows, or together with their spouses, thereby expressing an aspect of their piety. What we directly know about their activities is that married women lived with their spouses in a clearly rural milieu, given the agrarian location of the churches. The epigraphic evidence from Naxos affirms the primary place and role of women in family life as spouses and mothers. In addition to the traditional socially accepted conventions, with their role of fostering and nurturing others, they undertook to mediate with the heavenly powers for the protection of their family. Women were not separated from the male members of her family, since they appear side by side with their

110. See *PLP* 28027-28033, 28080-28122.

111. See, for instance, the case of Tompritza Tzykalo mentioned in a document of Mount Athos, dated to 1320: *Actes d'Iviron III. De 1204 à 1328*, ed. J. LEFORT, N. OIKONOMIDÈS, D. PAPACHRYSSANTHOU, V. KRAVARI and H. MÉTRÉVÉLI [Archives de l'Athos 18], Paris 1994, no. 77, line 116.

For the mixed marriages under complicated political circumstances, see D. NICOL, Mixed Marriages in Byzantium in the Thirteenth Century, in: *Studies in Church History*, ed. by C. W. DUGMORE and C. DUGGAN, London–Edinburg 1964, 160-172 (= IDEM, *Byzantium: Its Ecclesiastical*, as in footnote 29, IV). Especially for Asia Minor: E. ZACHARIADOU, Mixed Marriages and Society in the Selcuk Sultanate of Rum, in the present volume, 15-28. See also the story about the Scythian woman mentioned by Gregoras: A. SKLAVENITI, Women in Nikephoros Gregoras' Works: Love Stories, Politics, Literacy and Social Conventions, in the present volume, 160-161.

husbands. This pattern indicates the reinforcement of the bonds between the couples and families in a rigid structure reflecting the pre-eminence of the family life within a society organized in families. Individual families acted both as units projecting their family ties and their orthodox family image, but also as members of a collective patronage. Collective donations for the decoration of the church constituted a quite common scheme of sponsorship in villages and rural areas in the Late Byzantine period; this shows the poor means of the population to fulfill their religious feelings[112], even in a kind of competition among families in order to depict a better/richer or more strictly orthodox choices in the wall-paintings.

In this co-operative activity it is surprising that there is no mention of other relatives, for instance brothers and sisters or ancestors, as happens in inscriptions of other rural areas at the time[113]. This may mean that possibly there were not other relatives of the donors in the surroundings, an element supporting the idea that this strict structure of society points towards families being subject to exile. In the same context of exile we may view the tightened family ties, so much emphasized in most of the material surveyed above.

The primary donor of the wall paintings is mentioned first in the inscriptions and of course the first position always belonged to men, who represented the whole family reflecting a social system controlled by men. Priests, when mentioned, acquire a leading role as spiritual guides and probably more cultured persons. There are some examples of priests who are recorded with their families as donors attested both in individual donations and in collective ones.

Women who are listed first are widows acting as the leaders of the family. The widows give the impression of combining the family into a single effective and coherent social unit. Throughout the middle and Late Byzantine period, widows constantly occupied a position of respect in the Byzantine society, as is evident at least from the relevant legislation[114]. They were entirely in control

112. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Collective Patterns of Patronage (as in footnote 95), 126-130.

113. *Ibidem*, 128.

114. The legislation introduced by the Isaurian emperors, probably in 726, regulated the status of widows with the second chapter of Ecloga: ed. L. BURGMAN, *Ecloga, Das Gesetzbuch Leons III. und Konstantinos' V.* [Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte 10], Frankfurt am Main 1983, 2.5.1. This regulation remained almost the same throughout the whole Byzantine period: see GERSTEL and KALOPISSI-VERTI, Female Church Founders (as in footnote 70), 196. See I. M. KONIDARIS, Η θέση της χήρας στη Βυζαντινή κοινωνία από τους Πατέρες στους κανονολόγους του 12ου αιώνα, *Βυζαντινά* 16 (1991), 35-42. See

over their property, irrespectively of whether it had been included in their dowry or not. In any case, the engravers or the painters of the Naxian inscriptions, working under the donor's orders, do no underline any differentiation between masculine and feminine roles. They distinguished and stressed specifically the function of the donor. Thus, they declared in their works the individual person who was the leader of the family and had undertook the expenses of construction or decoration of the church.

In the existing inscriptions of Palaiologan Naxos most of the donors are laymen. The lack of significant distinguishing characteristics of the male donors stands out. No one among them held a political or military office, though in general such evidence is limited[115] in the concurrent Byzantine inscriptions. At any rate, this could also be an indication that they were exiles, who certainly were stripped of their rank. A more easily noticeable feature of the donors is that their level of education seems quite high, judging from the above inscriptions: most of them are written calligraphically, without grammatical errors and often enriched with appropriate patristic quotations[116]. Such a distinctive quality is especially given their agrarian location, in view of rural sites are usually characterised by lack of education[117]. Of particular interest is the total absence of the emperor's name, especially if we take in consideration that inscriptions from the same epoch found in other areas of the former Byzantine lands not only mention the ruling emperor, but also sometimes include expressions of admiration for him[118]. This could suggest that the Naxian donors, though being

---

also the relevant evidence from the documents of Mount Athos, discussed by Z. Getimi, Γυναίκες στην αγροτική κοινωνία του 14ου αιώνα. Η μαρτυρία των αγιορειτικών εγγράφων, *Βυζαντιακά* 33 (2016), 319-332, esp. 326, 329.

115. Kalopissi-Verti, Collective Patterns of Patronage (as in footnote 95), 128.

116. See, for instance, the extraordinary patristic extracts in the churches of St George at Lathreno, St John at Philoti, St John at Kerami, which have remarkably complicated contents: Constantinidi, *Ὁ Μελισμός* (as in footnote 18), 57-58. See also Kountoura Galaki, Decoding (as in footnote 22), 160-161.

117. N. Oikonomides, Literacy in Thirteenth-Century Byzantium: an Example from Western Asia Minor, in: *TO ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟΝ. Studies in Honor of Speros Vryonis, Jr.*, ed. by J. S. Langdon, St. W. Reinert, J. Stanojevich Allen and Chr. P. Ioannides, vol. 1, Scarsdale, N.Y 1993, 253-265 here at 262 (= N. Oikonomides, *Society, Culture and Politics in Byzantium*, ed. by E. Zachariadou [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot, Hampshire 2005, IV). See also Gerstel, *Rural Lives* (as in footnote 36), 72.

118. V. Foscolou, "In the Reign of the Emperor of Rome...": Donor Inscriptions and Political Ideology in the Time of Michael VIII Paleologos, *ΔXAE* 27 (2006), 455-462.

firmly entrenched in Byzantine tradition, disregarded the Byzantine central authority, possibly expressing in such way their hostility to the present regime. Moreover pictorial hints of irony against Michael VIII could be discerned, a view which has been the subject of earlier discussion[119].

This cultural phenomenon that was bound to be recorded both ideologically and visually yields additional information that brings us into contact with some of the realities of male and female donors' existence in their insular environment. Despite serious damage to the monuments, some donors' portraits have survived, helping us to glimpse these figures of the past and conjure up their visual image. Thus, the survived portraits constitute a clue in order to disclosing some donors' social background and origins.

The boy who was depicted in the wall painting of the church of Theotokos in Demos at Apeiranthos was wearing a long sleeved white tunic and above it a sleeveless multicoloured chlamys[120], similar to those of an adult male[121]. This kind of dress does not remind of rural clothing analogous to the environment in which this boy (and his family) was found to live, but rather an urban one.

In St George at Marathos, where we met the above-mentioned Galates family[122], a couple, very probably the donors who contributed to the expenses of this monument, is depicted wearing formal attire. The male figure wears a decorated belt, a sign of a nobleman[123]. The clothing of the depicted female figure is remarkably rich: light-coloured dress with striped decorations, wide embroidered belt, cloak with designs, square hat[124] that lets her hair to be visible[125].

---

119. See above, 180.

120. KALOKYRES, Ἔρευναι χριστιανικῶν μνημείων (as in footnote 42), 500. KALOPISSI-VERTI, *Dedicatory Inscriptions*, 109.

121. J. L. BALL, *Byzantine Dress: Representations of Secular Dress in Eighth-to Twelfth-Century Painting*, New York–Hampshire 2005, 100.

122. See above, 176.

123. ACHEIMASTOU-POTAMIANOU, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 20 and note 44. For the meaning of the Byzantine belts, see M. PARANI, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th Centuries)* [The Medieval Mediterranean 41], Leiden–Boston 2003, 22-23.

124. For the types of female dresses, see PARANI, *Reconstructing*, 72-76. BALL, *Byzantine Dress* (as in footnote 120), 57-69. For the hats as an indispensable complement of an aristocratic costume, see PARANI, *Reconstructing*, 77-78.

125. ACHEIMASTOU-POTAMIANOU, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 20 and note 44.

In the ruined at the present time church of Theotokos in Demos at Apeiranthos, where we come across to the Mavrikas family, a figure of a very well dressed woman has been noticed[126].

In the church of St John at Avlonitsa there is a young female portrait beside a rich-dressed man, who bears a hat decorated[127] with fur. Wearing a fur or decorating clothes with fur is a type of dress that is quite unusual for a Cycladic island. However, wearing clothes decorated with expensive material denotes a wealthy man. Besides, this depiction is not socially compatible with the rural environment of Naxos but rather with an urban one.

The question arises: are the portraits with the quality and richly embellished clothing just inventions of the painters or do they depict a reality? In this portraits the women's appearance is distinctive and, in the circumstances, paradoxical. Their presentation does not reflect a poor rural environment. There is no noticeable local colour. Perhaps some lost frescoes might have suggested Naxos, but the remaining ones indicate a Constantinopolitan identity as far as the persons involved were concerned. Their attire establishes a sense of geographical remoteness from the local environment and indicates relations with the capital rather than the island. Such details help define the donors' characteristics determining their profile and origins. Their images reflect persons who typically belonged to urban milieu and transferred their particular modes of expression to the Cycladic island. Most of them are mentioned with their surnames, such as Mavrikas, Strobiliates, Pediasimos, Galates, Charchazanes or Charsianeites, Tsykalopoulos, Tzykalas, which denote well-known or less-known Byzantine families[128] connected either with the Byzantine capital or with geographical space different from the insular environment, where we found them to live.

They were probably the opponents of Michael VIII Palaiologos who were forced together with their families to abandon the Byzantine capital and who relocated on Naxos, where they promoted the orthodox tradition recalling simultaneously their previous social situation through their self-depiction. The overall impression suggested by the inscriptions is that of a supplementary tool for decoding the contemporary cultural phenomenon which developed on Palaiologan Naxos and for revealing the donors' connections and their prime allegiance and purpose: to project the orthodox "image" away from Constantinople at a new home.

---

126. See above, 171-172.

127. ACHEIMASTOU-POTAMIANOU, Ἡ μνημειακὴ ζωγραφικὴ (as in footnote 10), 20 and note 48.

128. PENNAS, Βυζαντινὴ παράδοση (as in footnote 11), 149-150.

† Ruth Macrides

Women in the Late Byzantine Court

In their groundbreaking study of 'The Social World of the Byzantine Court', Alexander Kazhdan and Michael McCormick ask, 'And where in fact are the women?'[1]. They note that females of all ranks are almost totally absent from the tenth-century *Book of Ceremonies* and Philotheos' *Kletorologion*. On the few occasions when women are mentioned they form a distinct group at the court, with the empress at the head of the "court of women" (*τὸ σέκρετον τῶν γυναικῶν*), wives of the court dignitaries who hold the titles of their husbands. They constitute a group with 'its own autonomous social and ceremonial sphere'[2]. The "court of women" is mentioned on a few occasions. At the coronation of the empress, first the male members of the court come to make *proskynesis* to her, then the women of the court. On Holy Thursday, the emperor and his court venerate the relic of the Cross in Hagia Sophia in hierarchical order. On Good Friday the empress and women of the court do the same. At Hagia Sophia on Easter Sunday, the empress receives the wives of the court dignitaries to whom she gives the kiss of peace, in hierarchical order. When Olga of Kiev comes to Constantinople, she is presented to the empress, with the women of the court entering the reception in order of precedence. On the eighth day after the birth of a male child the women of the court come to pray, give thanks and cheer the empress. "Members of the senate" come after them to do the same[3].

---

1. A. P. Kazhdan and M. McCormick, The Social World of the Byzantine Court, in: *Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204*, ed. by H. Maguire, Washington, D. C. 1997, 167-197, here at 182.

2. *Ibidem*, 183.

3. Constantine Porphyrogennetos, *Ἔκθεσις τῆς βασιλείου τάξεως* (ed. J. J. Reiske, *Constantini Porphyrogeniti imperatoris De cerimoniis aulae Byzantinae* [CSHB], 2 vols, Bonn 1829-1830), vol. 1, 203.22-204.4, 67.7-68.4, 595.20-597.16; transl. with reproduction of Reiske edition and the same pagination in: A. Moffatt and M. Tall, *Constantine*

These examples suffice to show that in the tenth century, as indicated by the *Book of Ceremonies*, the court of women had its own ceremonial, parallel to that of the men of the court. Kazhdan and McCormick concluded that the situation at court reflected the general tendency of the Byzantine upper classes toward sexual segregation. However, they detected a change in this picture, an 'erosion' of the separate court of the women in the time of the Komnenoi, in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Women can then be found alongside men at the dinner table in the palace and in the same tent in the provinces. Kazhdan and McCormick cautiously suggested that further research might reveal that these examples are indicative of another significant social shift under the Komnenoi, 'a further instance of imitation of a western European life style'[4].

As is often the case with studies of the court and ceremonial, the study of Kazhdan and McCormick stopped before the last centuries of the Empire, ending with some references to the Komnenoi. It is worth asking, however, what developments there were in the women's court in the later period, after the *Book of Ceremonies* and after the Komnenoi. Is there further progress in the 'erosion' of the separate court of women, a relaxation of the segregation of the sexes?

We might expect to see a continuation of this supposed relaxation in the segregation of women also in the Palaiologan period and for several reasons. First, Michael VIII Palaiologos, after 1261, made a point of renewing twelfth century institutions and practices[5]. Furthermore, a greater integration of

---

Porphyrogennetos. The Book of Ceremonies [Byzantina Australiensia 18], vols I-II, Canberra 2012 (= *Book of Ceremonies*). The reference to Holy Thursday and Good Friday are from Arculf cited in Adomnan, a seventh-century abbot at Iona: *De locis sanctis*, ed. L. BIELER [CCSL 175] Turnhout 1965, 228.29-32; KAZHDAN and MCCORMICK, Social World (as in footnote 1), 184-185. On the ceremonial for Olga's reception, see J. M. FEATHERSTONE, Δι' ἔνδειξιν: Display in Court Ceremonial (*De Cerimoniis*, vol. II.15), in: *The Material and the Ideal. Essays in Medieval Art and Archaeology in Honour of Jean-Michel Spieser*, ed. by A. CUTLER and A. PAPACONSTANTINOU [The Medieval Mediterranean 70], Leiden-Boston 2007, 75-112, here at 106-110. For a ninth-century example, see the military treatise by Constantine Porphyrogennetos which includes the account of Theophilos' return from his war against the Saracens. He ordered "the wives of the senators" to leave the city and come to stay with the augousta in Hiereia where he and the senate were: J. F. HALDON, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions. Introduction, Edition, Translation and Commentary* [CFHB 27], Vienna 1990, 146.812-824.

4. KAZHDAN and MCCORMICK, Social World (as in footnote 1), 184-185.

5. See R. J. MACRIDES, The New Constantine and the New Constantinople-1261?, *BMGS* 6 (1980), 13-41 and EADEM, From the Komnenoi to the Palaiologoi: Imperial Models

women at court in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries would fit the narrative of progress that is commonly adopted by historians of Byzantium in their conceptualization of the women of the past[6]. Besides, the relaxation of the segregation of the sexes at court in the late thirteenth and fourteenth century might be expected, given that at this time women of all levels of society were prominent as business partners, and as plaintiffs and defendants in law courts, where they can be seen in unprecedented numbers, protecting their financial interests, often representing themselves in their cases[7].

Yet, if women are not much in evidence in the *Book of Ceremonies*, they are even less noticeable in the mid-fourteenth century ceremonial book known as Pseudo-Kodinos. There is no mention of the "court of women", nor of any space that might be theirs in the palace, which was by then the Blachernai palace. Only the apartments of the emperor –*kellia*– are mentioned[8]. The mother of the emperor appears twice in the coronation protocol. We are told what she wears

---

in Decline and Exile, in: *New Constantines: The Rhythm of Imperial Renewal in Byzantium, 4th-13th Centuries. Papers from the Twenty-Sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, St Andrews, March 1992*, ed. by P. MAGDALINO [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 2], Aldershot 1994, 269-282.

6. For a similar narrative in the historiography of western medieval women, see the remarks of M. MÜLLER, Peasant Women, Agency and Status in Mid-Thirteenth-to Late Fourteenth-Century England: Some Reconsiderations, in: *Married Women and the Law in Premodern Northwest Europe*, ed. by C. BEATTIE and M. F. STEVENS, Woodbridge 2013, 91-113, here at 92. The Byzantine narrative of progress has, however, been characterized as suffering setbacks and enjoying periods of improvement. See A. P. KAZHDAN, Women at Home, *DOP* 52 (1998), 1-17.

7. A. E. LAIOU, Women in the Marketplace of Constantinople (10th-14th Centuries), in: *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. by N. NECIPOĞLU [The Medieval Mediterranean 33], Leiden–Boston–Cologne 2001, 261-273 (= A. E. LAIOU, *Women, Family and Society in Byzantium*, ed. by C. MORRISSON and R. DORIN [Variorum Reprints], Farnham–Burlington 2011, IV); J. BEAUCAMP, Les femmes de l'espace public à Byzance: le cas des tribunaux, *DOP* 52 (1998), 129-145 (= EADEM, *Femmes, patrimoines, normes à Byzance* [Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de recherche 6], Paris 2010, XIV, 265-282); R. MACRIDES, Dowry and Inheritance in the Late Period: Some Cases from the Patriarchal Register, in: *Eherecht und Familiengut in Antike und Mittelalter*, ed. by D. SIMON, Munich 1992, 89-98 (= EADEM, *Kinship and Justice in Byzantium, 11th-15th Centuries* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 1999, V).

8. Pseudo-Kodinos (ed. R. MACRIDES, J. A. MUNITIZ, D. ANGELOV, *Pseudo-Kodinos and the Constantinopolitan Court: Offices and Ceremonies* [Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies 15], Farnham 2013 = Pseudo-Kodinos), 116.6, 118.8, 170.20, 367-78.

and what she carries". The wife of the emperor is likewise mentioned in the same protocol when the emperor her husband crowns her. After the emperor has put the crown on her head, she makes her *proskynesis* to him, "as if to acknowledge by this *proskynesis* that she is subordinate to him and that she has been subjected to him". With the newly crowned emperor she receives acclamations from the gallery of Hagia Sophia and together, emperor and empress, eat at a banquet in the Great Palace[10].

Could the relatively small number of references to the empress and wives of the court title holders show that in the fourteenth century the empress was better integrated into the court procedures and did not have a distinctive, separate realm in which she operated? Such a proposition is more than unlikely. First, one must take into consideration the size of Pseudo-Kodinos' work in comparison with the *Book of Ceremonies*, a compilation that is many times larger than the later ceremony book. The fourteenth-century collection does not include protocols for many ceremonies that most certainly did take place, such as births, baptism, funerals and receptions of foreign ambassadors[11]. If the collection had been fuller, the empress and other women of the court might have appeared more often.

Further, were there more appearances of women, they would not, it seems, contribute to the picture of an integrated court. One protocol that features women to a large extent and that Pseudo-Kodinos does include shows that the separate court of women was in existence also for the Palaiologan period, even if it is not given any name, much less the name "court of women". The protocol concerns an imperial bride-to-be and describes the reception of a foreign bride in Constantinople, the arrangements for her arrival and preparations for her new life. The empress herself is not mentioned but the women of the court are. We are told that the bride is to be met by the bridegroom and his father the emperor, but also by the "most distinguished and noble wives of the dignitaries, senators and other officials"[12]. The latter dress the bride in red clothing and send her forth on horseback with an escort to the palace. There, we can presume, she meets her mother-in-law, the empress mother, for the first time.

---

9. Pseudo-Kodinos, 218.11-220.2, 222.20-224.4.

10. *Ibidem*, 224.4-15, 234.4-238.2. The mother of the emperor and his wife are mentioned also in the context of the emperor's wax seals (*ibidem*, 86.14-88.2) and the emperor's attire when he is in mourning (*ibidem*, 262.1-9).

11. *Ibidem*, 19.

12. *Ibidem*, 266-269, here at 266.10-13; 266.20-268.2.

An illustrated poem, written for the reception and marriage of a foreign princess and preserved in *Vaticanus graecus 1851*[13], and sometimes referred to as an *epithalamion*, gives evidence of the role of the women of the court in meeting the bride and dressing her. Again, the mother-in-law is conspicuous by her absence. In this poem and its images the woman who is prominent among the women of the palace is the sister-in-law of the bride. Bride and sister-in-law are depicted embracing in a tent. Below, women of the court stand in audience before the enthroned bride and her sister-in-law[14]. On palaeographical and historical grounds, three dates have been suggested for the manuscript and the story it tells, the twelfth, the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. The bride has been identified either as Agnes-Anna of France, married to Alexios II Komnenos, son of Manuel I, in 1179; the Hungarian princess Anna, married to Andronikos II in 1274, or Maria-Kyratza of Bulgaria, married to John V's son Andronikos IV in 1356[15].

Whatever the date of the *epithalamion*, it has close parallels with Pseudo-Kodinos' protocol which itself could have been based on an earlier twelfth-century protocol[16]. However, narrative accounts of the arrivals of brides in

13. P. CANART, *Codices vaticani graeci. Codices 1745-1962*, vol. I: *Codicum enarrationes* [Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae codices manu scripti recensiti], Città del Vaticano 1970, 324-325; I. SPATHARAKIS, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* [Byzantina Neerlandica 6], Leiden 1976, 210-230; M. JEFFREYS, The Vernacular εἰσιτήριοι for Agnes of France, in: *Byzantine Papers. Proceedings of the First Australian Byzantine Studies Conference, Canberra, 17-19 May 1978*, ed. by E. and M. JEFFREYS and A. MOFFATT [Byzantina Australiensia 1], Canberra 1981, 101-115.

14. *Vat. gr. 1851*, f. 6^{r}: see SPATHARAKIS, *The Portrait*, fig. 170. This image of the women of the court is the first since the sixth-century Ravenna mosaic showing Theodora and members of her court.

15. JEFFREYS, The Vernacular εἰσιτήριοι (as in footnote 13), 101-115; C. J. HILSDALE, Constructing a Byzantine Augusta: a Greek Book for a French Bride, *Art Bulletin* 87/3 (2005), 458-483; J. STRZYGOWSKI, Das Epithalamion des Paläologen Andronikos II, *BZ* 10 (1902), 546-567; A. IACOBINI, La memoria del presente: tempo, spazio e cerimoniale principesco nell'Epitalamio Vat. Gr. 1851, in: *Medioevo: imagine et memoria. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi (Parma, 24-28 settembre 2008)*, ed. by A. C. QUINTAVALLE, Parma 2009, 279-296; C. HENNESSY, A Child Bride and her Representation in the Vatican Epithalamion, cod. gr. 1851, *BMGS* 30/2 (2006), 127-162.

16. For this suggestion, see P. MAGDALINO, Pseudo-Kodinos' Constantinople, in: IDEM, *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2007, XII, 1-14, here at 11-13.

Constantinople show that the practice outlined in the protocol was actually in use and had a long tradition. In the eighth century Eirene the Athenian, the betrothed of Leo IV, was met at Constantinople by the eminent people of the city and their wives[17]. In the twelfth century, Manuel I's fiancée, Bertha of Sulzbach, was likewise met by noble women and her sister-in-law[18]. There is one exception. When Helen Kantakouzene arrived in Constantinople from Adrianople in 1347 to marry John V, she was met by Anna of Savoy, mother of John V and widow of Andronikos III[19]. Might the reason be that she, as widow and regent, received the bride as 'emperor'[20], not as the mother of the groom?

The protocol for the reception in Constantinople of a foreign bride indicates that in Palaiologan Constantinople also there was a women's court functioning in the palace. If we are in any doubt about this point, narrative accounts further illustrate its existence. George Pachymeres tells the story of the cause for the downfall of the *porphyrogennetos* Constantine, the favourite son of Michael VIII Palaiologos. The emperor Andronikos II and his wife were in Anatolia in 1292, at Nymphaion, at the palace that had been inhabited earlier in the thirteenth century by the emperors John III Vatatzes and his son Theodoros II, and with them was the entire court. On 29 June, feast day of the Apostles Peter and Paul, the emperor Andronikos received his grand men (*megistanoi*) while his wife Eirene received the wives of the men:

> "While a great number of grand ladies presented themselves, the old woman of good birth, Strategopoulina arrived, niece of the emperor John Doukas who had been married to Constantine Strategopoulos, later blinded by the son of that emperor. Because it was not yet time for her to appear before the empress, she was seated somewhere outside, waiting for an invitation. But then the wife of the *porphyrogennetos* arrived, with a splendour and luxury befitting

17. Theophanes, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. C. DE BOOR, *Theophanis Confessoris, Chronographia*, vol. I, Leipzig 1883, repr. New York 1980 = Theophanes, *Chronography*), 444.15-19; Engl. transl. by C. MANGO and R. SCOTT, with G. GREATREX, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History, A.D. 284-813*, Oxford 1997, 613.

18. John Kinnamos, *Ἱστοριῶν Βιβλία Ζ΄* (ed. A. MEINEKE, *Ioannis Cinnami Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum* [CSHB], Bonn 1836), 36.1-8.

19. John Kantakouzenos, *Ἱστοριῶν Βιβλία Δ΄* (ed. L. SCHOPEN, *Ioannis Cantacuzeni eximperatoris Historiarum libri IV* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1828-1832 = Kantakouzenos, *History*), vol. III, 11.19.

20. See below, 195-196.

her and with a grand escort and following. She approached her aunt or rather, her grandmother, for her grandmother on her father's side was the cousin of that woman [Strategopoulina]. Although the old woman was supposed to give her seat to the woman who approached, for the latter had second rank after the empress, she looked upon her granddaughter as a child and did not rise from her seat but appealed to her by pointing out her age and her weakness. The wife of the *porphyrogennetos* felt immediately offended and could not withhold her anger, she a daughter-in-law of the emperor and wife of a man placed above the despots, while the other the widow of a man who had never received any title"[21].

The account of Pachymeres demonstrates that the female dignitaries were received by the empress in audience in strict hierarchical order, as were their husbands by the emperor. The women waited outside the *triklinos*, the reception hall, until they were called forward. Just as in Constantinople, so too outside the capital, in another palace, the traditional ceremonial was performed. Two parallel receptions, one female and one male, took place on the holy day.

The separate ceremonial spheres of men and women of the court is further indicated in the ceremony of the *prokypsis*, the most theatrical of Palaiologan ceremonies and one which may have had its origins in the twelfth century, under Manuel I Komnenos[22]. The emperor appeared on a tall stage, bathed in artificial light on dark winter afternoons at Christmas and Epiphany. Only the emperor's sons were present with him[23].

A woman could have her own *prokypsis*, at the time of her wedding. John VI Kantakouzenos gives a detailed description of the *prokypsis* of his daughter Theodora Kantakouzene, in 1346, which took place before she left for Anatolia to marry the sultan Orhan. Kantakouzenos was encamped with the army at Selymbria; his daughters and wife were with him.

"The emperor ordered that a *prokypsis* be made of wood in front of the city, on the plain, so that the betrothed daughter of the emperor might stand on it and become visible to all. It is the custom for emperors

21. George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* (ed. A. FAILLER, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations Historiques* [CFHB 24/1-5], vols I-V, Paris 1984-2000 = Pachymeres, *History*), VIII.19: vol. III, 173.4-25.

22. M. JEFFREYS, The Comnenian Prokypsis, *Parergon*, n.s. 55 (1987), 38-53.

23. Pseudo-Kodinos, 132-146 (text), 401-405 (study).

to do this for daughters who are getting married. The next day, Theodora, the one to be wed, went up onto the *prokypsis*, while the emperor alone was on horseback. All the others were on foot. When the curtains were opened–for the *prokypsis* was covered on all sides with gold silk fabric–the bride appeared. Large candles were lit on either side of her. Eunuchs held these, kneeling, so that they did not appear. Trumpets sounded. When they ceased to play, singers sang encomia written for the bride by certain learned men"[24].

The bride-to-be was the only woman among the men. Theodora's mother and sisters remained in the imperial tent. They did not witness the *prokypsis*[25].

In the fourteenth century, at the Palaiologan court, as before, the empress had a staff which included eunuchs. Pseudo-Kodinos mentions them at the coronation of the empress: "The new empress stands up and is supported on both sides either by two relatives or, if she does not have relations, by two eunuchs"[26]. Kantakouzenos, writing about Anna of Savoy's regency government, implies that eunuchs had a great influence at her court[27]. Other members of the empresses' staff are mentioned sporadically in the sources[28].

It is evident from what has been presented above that the ceremonial at the Palaiologan court, as it is described by Pseudo-Kodinos and other sources contemporary with him, was similar to that of the tenth century: two courts functioned at the Blachernai palace in parallel, as they had at the Great Palace, the one, that of the emperor and his officials, the other, of the empress and

24. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 587.16-588.16. For wedding *prokypseis*, see the discussion in Pseudo-Kodinos, 405-406.

25. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 587.23-588.4.

26. Pseudo-Kodinos, 224.4-7.

27. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 223.18-24; F. SCHRIJVER, The Court of Women in Early Palaiologan Byzantium, ca. 1260-1350, *BMGS* 42/2 (2018), 219-236. On eunuchs in late Byzantium, see N. GAUL, Eunuchs in the Late Byzantine Empire c. 1250-1400, in: *Eunuchs in Antiquity and Beyond*, ed. by S. TOUGHER, Swansea–London 2002, 199-219; CH. MESSIS, *Les eunuques à Byzance, entre réalité et imaginaire* [Dossiers byzantins 14], Paris 2014, 316. For eunuchs and the court of the women in the tenth century and earlier, see K. M. RINGROSE, Women and Power at the Byzantine Court, in: *Servants of the Dynasty. Palace Women in World History*, ed. by A. WALTHALL, Berkeley 2008, 65-80.

28. Eirene, wife of John III Vatatzes, had her own clergy, Joseph of Galesion, *anagnostes*: Pachymeres, *History*, IV.23: vol. II, 395.4-8; Anna of Savoy had her own *oinochoos*, Goudeles: Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 277.20-21; Pseudo-Kodinos, 318.

the wives of those officials who held the feminine form of the titles of their husbands and were known by them[29]. That it was considered necessary to have an empress to carry out the ceremonial duties at court is shown by the coronations of a daughter or a daughter-in-law in the absence of the wife of the emperor. After the death of Zoe and before his marriage to Eudokia, Leo VI crowned his daughter Anna augousta "because, there not being an augousta, it was not possible to carry out the prescribed banquets"[30]. Romanos I likewise crowned his daughter-in-law Sophia in the same month that his wife Theodora died[31]; he did not have a daughter. The necessity of maintaining two courts was cited as an excuse or apology for emperors' remarriage. In a letter to the pope, the patriarch Nicholas Mystikos gave as a possible excuse for the third marriage of Leo VI the argument that "there must be a woman in the palace who manages the things incumbent upon the wives of the *archontes*"[32]. The empress was, in other words, in charge of the ceremonial that pertained to the women of the court. Earlier, Michael II, wishing to remarry after the death of his first wife, "secretly sent messages to the leading senators urging them to beseech him to marry again, arguing that it is not right for them to be subject to an emperor, while their wives were deprived of a sovereign lady (*despoina*) and empress"[33]. If the emperor was not alive, it appears that his widow would take on the emperor's ceremonial role. For example, at Christmas, the empress Eudokia

29. See the remarks of M. McCormick, *Eternal Victory. Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Early Medieval West*, Cambridge 1986, 203 and note 71.

30. Symeon Logothetes, *Συμεὼν μαγίστρου καὶ λογοθέτου χρονικόν* (ed. S. Wahlgren, *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon* [CFHB 44], Berlin–New York 2006), §133, 31: 282.226-283.228.

31. John Skylitzes, *Σύνοψις Ἱστοριῶν* (ed. I. Thurn, *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* [CFHB 5], Berlin–New York 1973 = Skylitzes, *History*), 215.27-216.1; Engl. transl. by J. Wortley, *John Skylitzes*, Cambridge 2010, 209; Theophanes Continuatus, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. I. Bekker, *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus* [CSHB], Bonn 1838 = Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronography*), 402.

32. Nicholas I, *Τῷ τὰ πάντα ἁγιωτάτῳ πάπᾳ τῆς πρεσβυτέρας Ῥώμης Νικόλαος ἀρχιεπίσκοπος Κωνσταντινουπόλεως περὶ τῆς παραλόγως δεχθείσης τετραγαμίας παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις* (ed. R. J. H. Jenkins and L. G. Westerink, *Nicholas I Patriarch of Constantinople Letters* [CFHB 6], Washington, D. C. 1973), no. 32, 214-245, here at 220.81-83. Jenkins and Westerink translate *τὰ ἐπιβάλλοντα*, translated here as 'the things incumbent upon them', as 'ceremonies'.

33. Skylitzes, *History*, 44.80-86; transl. Wortley, 47. The translation has been adapted. See also, Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronography*, 78.9-16.

led her sons in the imperial procession to Hagia Sophia "as is customary for emperors"[34]. When Helena Kantakouzene came to Constantinople to marry John V, the widowed empress Anna of Savoy went to meet her, although it was the custom for the emperor and his son to do so[35].

The answer, then, to Kazhdan and McCormick's question –'How long did this separate "court of women" continue?'[36]– is, until the end of Byzantium. There seems to be no important transformation in the structure and function of the court of women. In any case, we would not see change in the ceremony books. These compilations are by their very nature preservative of traditional practices. Constantine VII makes plain in the *prooimia* to his work that the object of his compilation is "to record for those who come after us ...the tradition of our ancestral customs which have been neglected". Pseudo-Kodinos was likewise interested in preserving knowledge of practices as they were in the past, as well as in his own lifetime[37].

To detect change we must look outside the ceremonial books. It is there that Kazhdan and McCormick found the 'erosion' of the separate court of the women under the Komnenoi. Alexios I was accompanied on expeditions by his wife Eirene and the *gynaikonites*; Isaac II's dinner (*δεῖπνος*) in the palace included female relations; Eudokia Komnene was found to be in the same tent with Andronikos Komnenos in Pelagonia[38].

---

34. Michael Attaleiates, *Ἱστορία ἐκτεθεῖσα παρὰ Μιχαὴλ προέδρου κριτοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦ Ἱπποδρόμου καὶ τοῦ Βήλου, τοῦ Ἀτταλειάτου* (ed. I. PÉREZ MARTÍN, *Miguel Ataliates, Historia. Introducción, edición, traducción y comentario* [Nueva Roma 15], Madrid 2002), 75.14-16; Engl. transl. by A. KALDELLIS and D. KRALLIS, *The History: Michael Attaleiates* [DOML 16], Cambridge Ma–London 2012, 182-183.

35. See discussion above, 192.

36. KAZHDAN and MCCORMICK, Social World (as in footnote 1), 184.

37. *Book of Ceremonies*, I, 3-5, here at 4; II, 516-517. For Pseudo-Kodinos, see R. MACRIDES, 'The Reason is not Known.' Remembering and Recording the Past. Pseudo-Kodinos as an Historian, in: *L'écriture de la mémoire. La littérarité de l'historiographie. Actes du IIIe colloque international philologique «EPMHNEIA», Nicosie, 6-7-8 mai 2004*, ed. by P. ODORICO, P. AGAPITOS and M. HINTERBERGER [Dossiers byzantins 6], Paris 2006, 317-330.

38. KAZHDAN and MCCORMICK (Social World, as in footnote 1) give three examples. See John Zonaras, *Ἐπιτομὴ Ἱστοριῶν* (ed. TH. BÜTTNER-WOBST, *Ioannis Zonarae Epitomae Historiarum, Libri XIII-XVIII* [CSHB], vol. III, Bonn 1897 = Zonaras, *History*), 752.10-15, for the *gynaikonites* accompanying Alexios I to Thrace; for the meal and the incident in the tent, see Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nicetae Choniatae*

In fact, there is much more twelfth-century evidence for women of the court accompanying men on expeditions outside the capital. The empress Eirene was with the emperor Alexios in his 1094 campaign[39]. In the autumn of 1105 as Alexios travelled to Thessalonike, he had with him the women of the court, including his pregnant daughter-in-law, the wife of John II, who gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl, at Valavisda[40]. In 1107 the empress Eirene left Constantinople with the emperor and stayed with him until 1108 when Alexios went to meet Bohemond[41]. In 1113 the empress Eirene and the women of the court accompanied Alexios to Thrace, staying with him until he went to Philippopolis the following spring. The campaign against the Cumans at this time is probably the context for Anna Komnene's reference to having seen the buildings of Philippopolis "when I stayed there with the emperor"[42]. The emperor Manuel spent so much time away from the capital that 'for a decade and more in the mid-twelfth century, the heart of the Empire moved from Constantinople to the military camps in Macedonia'[43]. The title of the collection of letters written by the monk Iakobos to the *sebastokratorissa* Eirene refers to her as a 'fellow traveller' of the emperor Manuel, thus revealing the reason for their extensive correspondence: she was absent from the capital for an extended period of time with other members of the aristocracy[44]. Michael

---

Historia [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 1975 = Choniates, *History*), vol. I, 441.23-27 and 104.49-52.

39. Anna Komnene, Ἀλεξιάς (ed. D. R. Reinsch and A. Kambylis, *Annae Comnenae Alexias* [CFHB 40/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 2001 = *Alexias*), IX.5.3: vol. I, 268.42-43.

40. *Ibidem*, XII.4.4: vol. I, 370.42-44.

41. *Ibidem*, XIII.1-7: vol. I, 384-386, esp. 385.48-52 and XIII.4.1-3: vol. I, 394.28-395.49.

42. *Ibidem*, XIV.8.2: vol. I, 454.29-39; also XIV.7.4: vol. I, 451.24-25; also Zonaras, *History* (vol. III, 753.12-15) reports that the empress Eirene and the *gynaikonites* were with Alexios when he encamped at the foot of Mt. Papykion, before moving on to Philippopolis. For these and other references, see K. Sinclair, Anna Komnene and Her Sources for Military Affairs in the Alexiad, *Estudios bizantinos* 2 (2014), 143-185, here at 169-171. Sinclair makes the point that the women were not present for any military engagements.

43. M. Jeffreys, Manuel Komnenos' Macedonian Military Camps: a Glamorous Alternative Court?, in: *Byzantine Macedonia. Identity, image and history. Papers from the Melbourne Conference, July 1995*, ed. by J. Burke and R. Scott, Melbourne 2000, 184-198, here at 191.

44. Iacobos, *Letters* (ed. E. and M. Jeffreys, *Iacobi Monachi Epistulae* [CCSG 68], Turnhout 2009), 3: *συνέκδημον οὖσαν τῷ κραταιῷ καὶ ἁγίῳ ἡμῶν βασιλεῖ.*

Jeffreys has suggested that *ταξιδεύειν* and *εἰς τὸ ταξείδιον*, expressions found also in other twelfth-century texts, are technical terms for being on campaign with the emperor outside Constantinople[45].

Yet, even all this evidence does not make the twelfth century exceptional[46], nor does it show an erosion of the "court of women" in the twelfth century, for imperial women had been accompanying emperors on campaign long before the twelfth century and continued to do so long after[47]. Valens' wife Domnica, although five months pregnant, accompanied him in Asia Minor in 366[48]. Heraclius left Constantinople for the lands of the East, to fight the Arabs, with his wife Martina and child Heraclius[49]. In 964, in the second year of his reign, Nikephoros II Phokas left Constantinople with a large army to advance against Cilicia. "Theophano and her children were with him also". He was away for a year, spending the winter in Cappadocia and campaigning in the spring[50]. This example makes it clear that, as with the twelfth-century campaigns, women were left at camp, far from the military action[51].

A passage in Michael Attaleiates' History seems to show that empresses might accompany their husbands at the start of an expedition and then return

45. JEFFREYS, Manuel Komnenos' Macedonian Military Camps (as in footnote 43), 187. See also J. C. ANDERSON and M. J. JEFFREYS, The Decoration of the Sevastokratorissa's Tent, *Byz* 64 (1994), 8-18. For the court on campaign, see M. MULLETT, Tented Ceremony: Ephemeral Performances under the Komnenoi, in: *Court Ceremonies and Rituals of Power in Byzantium and the Medieval Mediterranean: Comparative Perspectives*, ed. by A. BEIHAMMER, ST. CONSTANTINOU and M. PARANI [The Medieval Mediterranean 98], Leiden–Boston 2013, 487-513.

46. KAZHDAN, Women at Home (as in footnote 6), 6: 'But this is the twelfth century'; likewise, LAIOU, Women in the Marketplace (as in footnote 7), 268; L. GARLAND, Imperial Women and Entertainment at the Middle Byzantine Court, in: *Byzantine Women: Varieties of Experience AD 800-1200*, ed. by EADEM, Aldershot 2006, 177-191, here at 180-182.

47. See É. MALAMUT, La tente impériale à Byzance: une cour ambulante (IV^e^-XII^e^ siècle), in: *Dynamiques sociales au Moyen Âge en Occident et en Orient*, ed. by EADEM, Aix-en-Provence 2010, 65-88.

48. On the travels of the Theodosian empresses, see S. DESTEPHEN, *Le voyage impérial dans l'Antiquité tardive: des Balkans au Proche-Orient*, Paris 2016, 109-144, here at 120.

49. Nikephoros, *Ἱστορία Σύντομος* (ed. C. MANGO, *Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople, Short History* [CFHB 13], Washington, D. C. 1990), §20.1-4.

50. Skylitzes, *History*, 268-270; transl. WORTLEY, 257.

51. On this point, see SINCLAIR, Anna Komnene and her Sources (as in footnote 42), 170-171.

to Constantinople. Attaleiates gives an account of the parting of Eudokia Makrembolitissa and Romanos IV Diogenes in 1071, at the start of his Manzikert campaign. Eudokia, "contrary to custom", had stayed behind in the palace and had not escorted Romanos, because of "some tension which occurs among couples", but then she had a change of heart and joined him. She stayed with him for some days when, "with the usual farewell solemnities she let him go to the east while she returned home"[52]. Attaleiates mentions the incident only because, by not joining Romanos at the start of the campaign, the empress did not act "according to custom". Her behaviour was out of the ordinary, out of keeping with what was supposed to happen and therefore, with hindsight, one of the many signs of the impending catastrophe at Manzikert[53]. It is perhaps because authors of narrative histories mention routine events only when something out of the ordinary occurs that we do not hear of scores of other similar cases of empresses accompanying emperors on their expeditions[54]. There is, however, a previous mention of an empress accompanying her husband at the start of a campaign. In the early ninth century, Michael I's wife, Prokopia is twice mentioned as going with him as far as Thrace, on his campaign against the Bulgarians. On the second occasion, according to Theophanes, "The multitude [of the army], displeased at this, turned to slander and abuse against Michael"[55].

The twelfth century, then, was not an exceptional time for the court of women. What is exceptional is the number of twelfth-century references to aristocratic women accompanying the emperor and army on campaign. The court of women continued to function as it had before, while at the same time women were accompanying the imperial army and living in camps when the

52. Attaleiates, *History*, 107.19-24; transl. KALDELLIS and KRALLIS, 263. I thank Kyle Sinclair for bringing this passage to my attention. See SINCLAIR, Anna Komnene and her Sources (as in footnote 42), 171 and note 107.

53. Attaleiates, *History*, 107.12-109.6; transl. KALDELLIS and KRALLIS, 261-264; R. MACRIDES, The Historian in the History, in: *ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝ, Studies in Honour of Robert Browning*, ed. by C. N. CONSTANTINIDES, N. M. PANAGIOTAKES, E. JEFFREYS and A. D. ANGELOU [Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Postbizantini di Venezia 17], Venice 1996, 205-224, here at 209-210.

54. A similar point has been made about references to ceremonial in Byzantine narrative accounts: they are mentioned only when something out of the ordinary occurs. See M. MCCORMICK, Analysing Imperial Ceremonies, *JÖB* 35 (1985), 1-20, here at 8.

55. Theophanes, *Chronography*, 495.20-22, 500.14-18; transl. MANGO and SCOTT, 679, 684. My translation differs from that of Mango and Scott.

emperor was on campaign. The evidence for the latter dates at least from the tenth century, from the very time when the *Book of Ceremonies* was being compiled, and continues into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries[56]. The ceremonial role of women at court and the capacity of women to act outside the palace alongside men are two separate issues that have become confused, I would suggest, because of a misconception about the *gynaikonites*, "the women's quarters".

The segregation of the sexes in the palace, as also in the more modest homes of other Byzantines, implicitly brings the phrase "women's quarters" to mind, the *gynaikonites*, a word not used in the ceremony books but very much in evidence in the writings of medieval and modern authors. Synonymous with a lack of freedom of movement in the written works of modern authors, in medieval texts the word is descriptive of a space and also of the people who occupied it[57]. For the historian today, the degree to which women could 'break free of its confines' is the measure of their capacity to act on their own behalf, to exercise agency. For example, in writing about the lives of ten high status Byzantine women of this period, women at the imperial court and their relatives, Donald Nicol remarked that 'In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Byzantine women seemed to feel more free and more confident to do and say things than their ancestors'. He attributed this freedom to the fact that 'they were no longer confined to the women's quarters of their houses'[58].

One of the reasons the women's quarters has a negative reputation as a confined and confining space is that it has either explicitly or implicitly been confused with the Ottoman harem[59]. Indeed, Sewter, the author of the much read and highly influential Penguin translation of Psellos' *Chronographia*, did just that; he rendered *gynaikonites* as 'harem', in the account of the joint rule of Zoe and Theodora in 1042: 'For the most part they confused the trifles of the harem

56. See the examples above at 192-194, reported by Pachymeres and Kantakouzenos.

57. See SCHRIJVER, The Court of Women (as in footnote 27), 221-222, who cites the fourteenth-century *Lexicon* of Andreas Lopadiotes (ed. A. NAUCK, *Lexicon Vindobonense*, St Petersburg and Leipzig 1867, repr. Hildesheim 1965, s.v. γ: 20.1-3).

58. See D. M. NICOL, *The Byzantine Lady: Ten Portraits 1250-1500*, Cambridge 1994, 3, 4.

59. This view was first expressed by Sir ST. RUNCIMAN, Women in Byzantine Aristocratic Society, in: *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. by M. ANGOLD [British Archaeological Reports. International Series 221], Oxford 1984, 10-22, here at 13.

with the important matters of state'[60]. Yet, there is no textual or archaeological evidence that the women's quarters in Byzantine palaces resembled the harem, either spatially or socially. In her study of the harem at the Topkapi palace in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Gülru Necipoğlu speaks of 'the constricted spaces of the prisonlike harem...'. When women of the harem wanted to go into the outer gardens –the only free space available to them– 'the pages and gardeners had to evacuate the gardens ... so that no man remained in sight.' Furthermore, unlike their Byzantine counterparts, Ottoman women of the palace did not constitute a parallel court. When royal Ottoman women took part in processions and other ceremonies they were concealed within a carriage or a palanquin[61]. The little that is known about the Byzantine women's quarters shows another difference with the Ottoman harem: there was communication between the *gynaikonites* and the rest of the palace. For the Blachernai palace, a palace very different in structure and layout from the Great Palace, the location and the arrangement of the women's quarters is unknown[62]. In the Great Palace, according to Anna Komnene, a curtain separated the *gynaikonites* from the room in which her father interrogated Basil the Bogomil[63]. Men could and did visit the *gynaikonites*, not only eunuchs[64], while in the Ottoman harem only the

60. E. R. A. Sewter, *Fourteen Byzantine Rulers: The Chronographia of Michael Psellus*, Harmondsworth 1979, 157; Michael Psellos, *Χρονογραφία* (ed. D. R. Reinsch, *Michaelis Pselli Chronographia* [Millennium Studies 51/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–Boston 2014, VI,5.5: vol. I, 109: *τὰ πλεῖστα δὲ τὰ τῆς γυναικωνίτιδος παίγνια*.

61. G. Necipoğlu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power. The Topkapi Palace in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, Cambridge, Ma.–London 1991, 159-183, here at 183; L. P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem. Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire*, New York–Oxford 1993, 3-8, 143, 187, 191-198.

62. Only the emperor's rooms are mentioned. See above, 189. For the Blachernai palace, see R. Macrides, The Citadel of Byzantine Constantinople, in: *Cities and Citadels in Turkey: From the Iron Age to the Seljuks* [Ancient Near East Studies Supplement Series 40], ed. by S. Redford and N. Ergin, Louvain–Paris–Walpole, Ma 2013, 277-304. That there was a part of the Blachernai palace called the *gynaikonites* is known from Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 202.19-203.20.

63. *Alexias*, XV.8.5: vol. I, 487.89-93: *παραπέτασμα γὰρ μεταξὺ τήν τε γυναικωνίτιν ἀπε-τείχιζε*. Curtains were used throughout the palace to demarcate spaces. There is therefore nothing particularly unique about the *gynaikonites*. See M. Parani, Curtains in the Middle and Late Byzantine House, in: *Liminal Fabric: Furnishing Textiles in Byzantium and Early Islam*, ed. by G. Bühl and E. Williams Washington, D. C. (forthcoming).

64. Kantakouzenos, *History*, vol. II, 202.19-203.20.

sultan and the eunuchs could mediate between the women's space and that of the men[65]. Even the so-called *katechoumena* or *gynaikites*, the gallery, in Hagia Sophia was not reserved for women only[66].

The historiography of women provides 'a looking-glass reflecting the debates and concerns regarding the status of women in the societies of the historians writing about them'. This observation, taken from a study of peasant women in late medieval England[67] is equally apt for Byzantine studies. For Kazhdan and McCormick, writing in the second half of the 1990s, an erosion or relaxation of the segregation of women at court was by implication a positive development, an improvement in the condition of aristocratic Byzantine women who were then perhaps more like their western medieval counterparts, having broken out of their confined space. The ceremonial evidence discussed above shows that the court of women was in existence until the fall of Constantinople. It is not in ceremonial that one will find change. *Taxis* had to be maintained at the palace and women, like men, had to perform their part. That women might eat a meal with men in the palace or live for a long period of time in a camp in the provinces, are not indications of change, of a relaxation in the segregation of the sexes. For there is no reason to doubt that also at camp women had their own space, separate from men. The sources imply that this was the case. Both empresses Eirene, the wives of Alexios I and Manuel I, are said to have had their 'small chamber' when they accompanied their husbands[68]. That Eudokia was

65. NECIPOĞLU, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power* (as in footnote 61), 182.

66. R. F. TAFT, S. J., Women at Church in Byzantium: Where, When–and Why?, *DOP* 52 (1998), 27-87, here at 86-87.

67. MÜLLER, Peasant Women (as in footnote 6), 92.

68. Anna Komnene speaking of her mother Eirene's accompaniment of the army in 1105, says that the only sign of her presence was the 'small chamber carried by the mules and the imperial curtain above'. *Alexias*, XII.3.1-6: vol. I, 364.69-366.39, here at XII.3.6: vol. I, 366.37-39): *καὶ τοῦτο μόνον, ὅτι βασιλὶς παρέπεται τῷ στρατεύματι, ὁ φερόμενος ταῖν ἡμιόνοιν οἰκίσκος ἐδείκνυ καὶ τὸ ἄνωθεν βασιλικὸν καταπέτασμα.* Similarly, Basil Achridenos, metropolitan of Thessalonike, describes an occasion when the emperor Manuel and his first wife, the empress Eirene, were in the vicinity of Thessalonike on Easter Sunday. He performed the sacrament of the Eucharist and gave Holy Communion to each separately, the emperor in his tent and the empress, in her small chamber. See *Τοῦ γεγονότος Θεσσαλονίκης κῦρ Βασιλείου τοῦ Ἀχριδηνοῦ λόγος ἐπιτάφιος ἐπὶ τῇ ἐξ Ἀλαμανῶν δεσποίνῃ* (ed. W. REGEL and N. NOVOSADSKIJ, *Fontes Rerum Byzantinarum. Rhetorum saeculi XII orationes politicae*, vol. I, 1-2, St Petersburg 1892-1917, repr. Leipzig 1982), 322.7-25, here at 322.24-25: *ὁ δὲ τὴν βασιλίδα ἔχων οἰκίσκος.* MULLETT, Tented Ceremony (as in footnote 45), 506, for the tent as a replication of the palace.

in the same tent with Andronikos Komnenos is not evidence to the contrary: they were lovers. In the fourteenth century, the mother and sisters of Theodora Kantakouzene were in their tent in the camp of the army and did not witness her *prokypsis* performance as the bride-to-be.

The apparent continuity in the segregation of the sexes at court does not, however, allow us to infer that women who were members of the court of women were restricted in their movements and actions. Apparent setbacks or improvements in the historiography of women have more to do with the authors of the narratives, the context of their writing and their purpose in writing than with the 'real' situation of women[69]. Thus, at the height of the supposed relaxation of the segregation of the sexes at court, Isaac II's wife, Maria of Hungary, was said by Choniates to be "confined" in the palace when the head of the rebel Branas was brought to her, while in the fifteenth century, a time of supposed decline in women's freedom of movement[70], the empress Maria, wife of John VIII, dined somewhere in Constantinople outside the palace, with her entourage of men, women and guards, and was seen by Bertrandon de la Brocquière mounting her horse to return to the palace. However, on another occasion, a feast day, he saw her observing from a room above the service that was being conducted below in the chapel of the palace. Sophia of Montferrat, shunned by her husband and living a solitary life in her chambers, left the palace to visit gardens outside the city walls and boarded a Genoese ship to return to the west. When she left the palace she was accompanied by her "*gynaikonites*, women who spoke the same language as she, and a few young men whom she had brought from her paternal home"[71].

In the Palaiologan period women at court retained a female ceremonial sphere, a social sphere around the empress, consisting of the wives of the male members of the court, her attendants and daughters. Yet despite these elements

---

69. See A. KALDELLIS, The Study of Women and Children: Methodological Challenges and New Directions, in: *The Byzantine World*, ed. by P. STEPHENSON, London–New York 2010, 61-71; also L. NEVILLE, Strong Women and their Husbands in Byzantine Historiography, in: *ibidem*, 72-82.

70. KAZHDAN, Women at Home (as in footnote 6), 3.

71. For Maria of Hungary: Choniates, *History*, vol. I, 389.67-73: *ἔνδον τῶν ἀνακτόρων καθειργμένη*; for Maria Komnene: Bertrandon de la Brocquière, *Le voyage d'Outremer*, ed. CH. SCHEFER, Paris 1892, 156-157, 166; for Sophia of Montferrat: Doukas, *History* (ed. V. GRECU, *Ducas Istoria turco-bizantină (1341-1462)* [Scriptores byzantini 1], Bucharest 1958), 137.12-139.14, here at 137.23-31.

palace can be seen managing business enterprises and giving [illegible] over their dowries and inheritances. Are these indications that a [illegible] has occurred? Or could it be that the unique document which the [illegible] register is has misled us into thinking that something had changed when actually it had been so for centuries?

72. F. Barišić, Povelje vizantijskich carica, *ZRVI* 13 (1971), 143-202. É. Malamut, L'impératrice byzantine et la court (XIIIe-XVe siècle), *ZRVI* 50 (2013) = *Mélanges Ljubomir Maksimović*, 645-661; Eadem, L'impératrice byzantine et le cérémonial (VIIIe-XIIe siècle), in: *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan*, ed. by O. Delouis, S. Métivier and P. Pagès [Byzantina Sorbonensia 29], Paris 2016, 329-374, here at 346-353, 365-366; É. Malamut, Pouvoir et influence des impératrices de Thessalonique, trois exemples célèbres du XIVe siècle, in: *Villes méditerranéennes au Moyen Age*, ed. by É. Malamut and M. Ouerfelli, Aix-en-Provence 2014, 59-74.

of so-called segregation, in the same period empresses issued documents in their own name and held court in Thessalonike[72], while women outside the palace can be seen managing business enterprises and going to the law courts over their dowries and inheritances. Are these indications that a transformation has occurred? Or could it be that the unique document which the patriarchal register is has misled us into thinking that something had changed when actually it had been so for centuries?

72. F. Barišić, Povelje vizantijskich carica, *ZRVI* 13 (1971), 143-202; É. Malamut, L'impératrice byzantine et la court (XIIIe-XVe siècle), *ZRVI* 50 (2013) = *Mélanges Ljubomir Maksimović*, 645-661; Eadem, L'impératrice byzantine et le cérémonial (VIIIe-XIIe siècle), in: *Le saint, le moine et le paysan. Mélanges d'histoire byzantine offerts à Michel Kaplan*, ed. by O. Delouis, S. Métivier and P. Pagès [Byzantina Sorbonensia 29], Paris 2016, 328-374, here at 346-353, 365-366; É. Malamut, Pouvoir et influence des impératrices de Thessalonique: trois exemples célèbres du XIVe siècle, in: *Villes méditerranéenes au Moyen Age*, ed. by É. Malamut and M. Ouerfelli, Aix-en-Provence 2014, 59-74.

WOMEN BEYOND BYZANTIUM

ANGELIKI PANOPOULOU*

Working Indoors and Outdoors: Female Labour, Artisanal Activity and Retail Trade in Crete (14th-16th centuries)

The position of women in Europe's labour markets from the Middle Ages to the early Modern Times has been the subject of substantial and extensive research during the last years. Nevertheless, the most recent studies aimed to reconsider earlier, often contradictory, interpretations which argued that the salient features of women's work were *inter alia*: spinning and weaving for domestic use, unskilled seasonal employment, tasks which complemented and were linked to their husbands' work, low wages or piece work, and the unavailability of apprenticeships. Based on –chiefly notarial– archive material, various new and more dynamic approaches have demonstrated that: female apprenticeship existed not only within the family; women were active in various fields, not only in weaving; women often worked in areas entirely disconnected from their husbands' work; and that, although gender difference was one of the main features determining wages, it was not of overriding significance[1].

Women's contributions to the economy of Venetian-ruled Crete was first studied in the 1980s, when their occupations, wages and active involvement

* Institute of Historical Research / The National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens.

My heartfelt thanks to my colleagues and editors Eleonora Kountoura Galaki and Ekaterini Mitsiou for the honour to invite me to participate in the workshop and contribute to this volume. I would also like to thank my colleague Ch. Gasparis for his thoughtful corrections and improvements on my text.

1. See the well-researched study by M. P. ZANOBONI, Il lavoro femminile in Italia e in Europa nel basso medioevo: stato delle ricerche e nuovi spunti interpretativi, *Storia Economica* 18/1 (2015), 141-200, mainly 141-145, where the author refers to the new interpretations and refutes the view of women's labour as marginalised put forward, for instance in the study by D. HERLIHY, *Opera Muliebria: Women and Work in Medieval Europe*, Philadelphia 1990 and others. See also the recent books by A. BELLAVITIS, *Il lavoro delle donne nelle città dell'Europa moderna*, Rome 2016 and M. P. ZANOBONI, *Donne al lavoro nell'Italia e nell'Europa medievali (secc. XIII-XV)*, Milan 2016.

in transactions of every sort were documented[2]. An earlier insightful research, based on notarial material from the fourteenth century, revealed that among 732 work and apprenticeship contracts, 49 related to women with 41 being work contracts and only eight regarding apprenticeships[3]. Later research (focused on other notarial documents dating from the same century) has added much to our knowledge and revised the discussion on the employment of Greek, Latin and Jewish women in domestic service, industry, trade, investment, credit and wine sectors[4].

These studies demonstrated the types of professional and economic activities undertaken by women. However, neither women's work has been linked to the island's economic structures nor has been investigated the impact, which Crete's production sectors had on women's presence in the workplace. This paper initially deals with the female workforce which was active in the manufacturing and commercial (mainly retail) sectors. The integration of female labor into the general economic context, which is attempted subsequently, permits an assessment of the extent to which women workers were independent of/dependent on the economic conditions, which were formed on Crete between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. For a more comprehensive examination of the matter, other issues are also explored in this article, such us female apprenticeship contracts and women's workplaces both inside and outside the home.

In a decree issued on 13 March 1351[5] which laid out the daily wages for

2. Chr. A. Maltezou, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας στὶς νοταριακὲς πράξεις τῆς περιόδου τῆς βενετοκρατίας, *Κρητολογία* 16-19 (1983-1984), 62-79, esp. 73-78.

3. E. Santschi, Contrats du travail et d'apprentissage en Crète vénitienne au XIV[e] siècle d'après quelques notaires, *Revue Suisse d'Histoire* 19 (1969), 34-74, esp. 60.

4. S. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule in the Early Renaissance: Observations on their Economic Activities, *Renaissance Quarterly* 51/1 (Spring 1998), 34-67.

5. *Duca di Candia, Quaternus consiliorum (1350-1363)*, ed. by P. Ratti Vidulich [Comitato per la pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia. Fonti per la storia di Venezia. Sez. I-Archivi Pubblici], Venice 2007, 20, 23, nr. 22. For a more detailed account of the provisions related to these occupations during this period, see Ch. Gasparis, Οι επαγγελματίες του Χάνδακα κατά τον 14ο αιώνα. Σχέσεις με τον καταναλωτή και το κράτος, *Σύμμεικτα* 8 (1989), 83-133. See also Chr. Maltezou, The Historical and Social Context, in: *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete*, ed. by D. Holton, Cambridge 1991, 17-47, esp. 39-40. On professions/occupations in general, see Chr. Maltezou, Métiers et salaires en Crète vénitienne (XVe siècle), *BF* 12 (1987), 321-341; A. Panopoulou, Craftsmen, Tools and Workshops in Candia under the Venetian Rule, in: *Byzantina et Moderna. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Hélène Antoniadis-Bibicou*, ed. by G. Grivaud and S. Petmezas, Athens [2007], 85-97; Eadem, *Συντεχνίες και θρησκευτικές αδελφότητες στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη*

various professions along with the price of the products they produced, three professions were divided into male and female practitioners: tailors/seamstresses (*iupparius, iupparia*)[6], tailors/seamstresses (*sartor, sartoressa*) and weavers (*textor, texrix*):

> *Item nullus iupparius nullaque iupparia audeat accipere pro magisterio et cusitura alicuius zupe ac velesio nove sclete tam a viro quam a muliere ultra grossos VIIII...*
>
> *Item nullus sartor et sartoressa audeat accipere pro magisterio et cusitura alicuius varnimenti a viro inforata de çendato, sarçina et çambelloto et quolibet alio pano de seta scleto, ugnolo et dimidietate ultra grossos V...*
>
> *Item quod nullus textor seu texrix non audeat accipere pro suo labore ultra soluciones infrascriptas pro texendo tellam...*

No such distinction was made in the provisions related to the other listed crafts (goldsmiths, carpenters, masons, coopers etc.). This reference to female workers suggests that a significant number of women were employed in the sectors in question (weaving, tailoring, making outerwear). For that reason the authorities distinguished the craftsmen's gender[7]. But, at a second reading,

---

[Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Tommaso Flanghini 7], Athens-Venice 2012, 47-49, with bibliography on relevant issues.

6. Meaning a tailor who specialised in making overcoats or cloaks for men and women (*zupe ac velesio nove sclete tam a viro quam a muliere*). For more on the *ζουπάρη* (zoupari) and the *ζούπες* (zoupes) (*zupae*), see Ph. Koukoules, Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν Κρητικὴν λαογραφίαν ἐπὶ Βενετοκρατίας, *EEKΣ* 3 (1940), 1-101, esp. 46-47; Z. N. Tsirpanlis, *"Κατάστιχο Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ Μοναστηριῶν τοῦ Κοινοῦ" (1248-1548). Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτη τῶν σχέσεων Πολιτείας καὶ Ἐκκλησίας στὴ βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη* [University of Ioannina. Scientific Journal of the Philosophical Faculty. "Dodoni" Annex 23], Ioannina 1985, 92, n. 6; Gasparis, Οι επαγγελματίες του Χάνδακα (as in footnote 5), 112, n. 3 and L. Guzzetti, Le donne a Venezia nel XIV secolo: uno studio sulla loro presenza nella società e nella famiglia, *Studi Veneziani* n.s. 35 (1998), 15-88, esp. 42. Cf. the issues raised in A. Vitali, *La moda a Venezia attraverso i secoli. Lessico Ragionato*, Venice 1992, 445-451 [Zupa (Çupa), Zupello, Zupòn, Zipòn].

7. A similar distinction is made in the contemporaneous statutes of the guilds of Venice, with the *fustagnai* (fustian weavers) being divided into *tessitori* and *tessitrici*, and *battitori* and *filatrici* (R. Mackenney, The Guilds of Venice: State and Society in the longue durée, *Studi Veneziani* n.s. 34 (1997), 15-43, esp. 24; Guzzetti, Le donne a Venezia (as in footnote 6), 41-42), and of other European cities (D. Herlihy, Women's Work in the Towns of

the decree clearly hints at an intention on the part of the state to monitor and control female labour, too, by enforcing equal pay for men and women, given that consumers would favour female professionals if their rates were lower[8]. In addition, the content of the decree also provides us with important information concerning the goods produced by the named artisans of both sexes, as well as indicating significant artisanal activity in Candia.

Weaving, as testified by sources from the early Venetian period, was a particularly important sector for the employment of women, who made up the bulk of its workforce. However, on Crete, weaving was conducted on a smaller scale than in the large artisanal centres of the time: there the featured workshops employed a large number of specialised female workers and apprentices, as well as female cloth merchants. Certainly, weaving accounts for the majority of the female apprenticeships discovered in the notarial material, with the first known agreements of this sort appearing in the early fourteenth century. It was an occupation that required an apprenticeship under an experienced weaver. In 1321, Maria de Policandro, an inhabitant of the village of Pentamodi, gave her daughter Cherana to Herini Vlastudhena an inhabitant of Candia, with the agreement that Cherana would provide her services both in the weaving and housekeeping (*tam in servicio artis tue quam in omnibus aliis serviciis domus tue*) for a period of ten years. However, this document differs from other relevant apprenticeship contracts, because it mentions the artisanal training at its end and after the clause penalty, which would be applied to the girl if she was disobedient. Nonetheless, the contract does explicitly and undeniably state that, after the period of ten years, Cherana must have sufficiently good knowledge of weaving (*bene instructa in arte texarie*). This phrase allow us to trace her mother's anxiety that domestic duties undertaken by Cherana could prevent her from being initiated fully into the art[9].

Traditional Europe, in: *La donna nell'economia secc. XIII-XVIII*, ed. by S. CAVACIOCCHI [Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica "F. Datini"–Le Monnier: Serie II-Atti delle "Settimane di Studi" e altri Convegni 21], Florence 1990, 103-130).

8. For a more detailed discussion on controls placed on women's work by means of decrees issued by guilds and states, see ZANOBONI, Il lavoro femminile in Italia (as in footnote 1), 175-189; EADEM, Mobilità sociale e lavoro femminile nelle grandi città italiane, in: *La mobilità sociale nel Medioevo italiano. Competenze, conoscenze e saperi tra professioni e ruoli sociali (secc. XII-XV)*, ed. by L. TANZINI and S. TOGNETTI, Rome 2016, 62-68.

9. *The Documents of Angelo de Cartura and Donato Fontanella: Venetian Notaries in Fourteenth-Century Crete*, ed. A. M. STAHL, Washington, D.C. 2000, 240, nr. 49. Cf. MCKEE, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 46.

Numerous contracts were drawn up concerning the purchase of wool or silk, presumably for weaving use. In fifteenth-century documents the following women are mentioned by name as purchasers of quantities of wool: *Herini Ghrussudena*, *Stamata Vatacena*, *Calli Gavrilena*, *Marchesina Mudacena* and *Marula*, the widow of Marco Gignolo[10].

Weaving silk required specialised knowledge and techniques. Therefore and for this particular purpose the learning of art was conducted under the guidance of an experienced woman technician, the "mastorissa" [master craftswoman]. For example, in 1538, Kyriaki, daughter of Aneza and Theodoris Patrikios, was to be apprenticed for a period of two years to Theofili, wife of Stefanis Mintianos, in order to learn the *ἀνυφαντικὴν τοῦ μεταξοῦ*[11] [weaving of silk]. The Cretan women transferred their weaving know-how to the places they moved to. A Cretan female silk worker is referred to as being in Venice in 1424[12], but we ignore whether she acquired her craft in Crete or Venice. Immigrants taught their art at their place of settling, as in the case of Reggina, the wife of Giorgos Paris of Candia, who undertook to teach the art of weaving to Diamanti, the daughter of Nikoletto Politi in Corfu[13].

The apprenticeship contracts that have come to light verify the participation of women in the shoemaking and tanning sectors, even though neither features in the aforementioned state provisions. The following cases are particularly indicative: A contract from 1371 mentions Fingenu, daughter of Georgios Kallergis, who was to be apprenticed for two years in the workshop of the shoemaker Gregorios Gizis. However, she would not learn the craft from Gizis himself, but rather from his wife, Agnes. One woman teaching another one the art of shoemaking also appears in a contract from 1389, when Phylipa Serigo

---

10. Maltezou, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας (as in footnote 2), 75.

11. *Μιχαήλ Μαράς. Νοτάριος Χάνδακα. Κατάστιχο 148, vol. 2 (2/3-31/8 1538)*, ed. G. K. Mavromatis [Vikelaia Municipal Library. Venetian Fonts of Cretan History 7], Herakleion 2006, 282-283, nr. 365. Cf. Maltezou, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας (as in footnote 2), 75.

12. D. Jacoby, I Greci ed altre comunità tra Venezia e oltremare, in: *I Greci a Venezia. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studio, Venezia, 5-7 novembre 1998*, ed. by M. Fr. Tiepolo and E. Tonetti, Venice 2002, 41-82, esp. 55; Chr. Maltezou, The History of Crete during the Fifteenth Century on the Basis of Archival Documents, in: *The Hand of Angelos: An Icon Painter in Venetian Crete*, ed. by M. Vassilaki, London–Athens 2010, 26-37, esp. 32.

13. K. Zaridi and F. Karlafti–Mouratidi, Συμμετοχή γυναικών σε δικαιοπραξίες στη Βενετοκρατούμενη Κέρκυρα, *Ηπειρωτικά Χρονικά* 44 (2010), 129-166, esp. 141.

agreed to teach Frangula, daughter of Lucia Dono, the skill of shoemaker[14]. A third apprenticeship contract, this time from 1432, states that a Jewish girl by the name of Esther would be apprenticed to the Jewess shoemaker Kali Çuchiri[15]. All the above documents attest to some women were skilled workers and betray the anticipations of the girls to acquire technical knowledge and work experience for the future. Another work contract concerning the relevant field of tanning was drawn up between the furrier (*piliparia*) Maria Brixiano and Kali, Nikolos Dario's widow, whose two sons were about to work in the furrier's workshop for a year. The leather-processing tasks (*levare vel pellamen ire pro aqua*) mentioned in the document and the fact that one of the instruments was to be passed on to the boys at the end of the contracted period, make clear that the tannery belonged to Maria Brixiano herself, who was in possession of both the requisite know-how and the means of production[16].

Women also worked in the foodstuffs sector as tavern keepers and bakers. As happens in the cases of tailors, overcoat makers and weavers, decrees of the years 1313, 1316 and 1322 similarly distinguish male from female tavern keepers (*tabernarius/tabernaria*) and, mainly, bakers (*pancogolus/pancogola/e*)[17]:

> *Clamatum fuit puplice per R[içardum] gastaldionem quod nullus pancogolus vel pancogola audeat de cetero dare aliqui puero panaterie aliquam solucionem in denariis vel rebus pro bolatura pannum nec pro aliquo servicio officii panaterie modo aliquo vel ingenio, sub pena solvendi de quolibet grosso vel valore rei grossos XII comuni...*
>
> *Clamatum fuit publice per Bartholomeum gastaldionem quod nullus pancogolus vel pancogola audeat facere panem pro aliqua persona nec pro suo comedere nisi panem fuerit bullatum bulla comunis, sub pena yperperorum V pro quolibet contrafaciente...*
>
> *Clamatum fuit publice per P[etrum] Vido ga[staldionem] quod a die veneris proxime venturo in antea nulla alia persona audeat facere*

14. On the two apprenticeship contracts, see McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 44.

15. Maltezou, The History of Crete during the Fifteenth Century (as in footnote 12), 35.

16. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 44.

17. *Duca di Candia, Bandi (1313-1329)*, ed. P. Ratti Vidulich [Comitato per la pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia. Fonti per la storia di Venezia. Sez. I-Archivi Pubblici], Venice 1965, 6 nr. 3, 7-8 nr. 7, 53 nr. 148, 121 nr. 322. See also Gasparis, Οι επαγγελματίες του Χάνδακα (as in footnote 5), 89-92 and Maltezou, The Historical and Social Context (as in footnote 5), 39.

panem ad vendendum nisi illi pancogoli et pancogolle qui constituti erunt per signoriam ad faciendum panem, sub pena yperperorum XXV pro quolibet contrafaciente.

There is no question that the above decrees set the cash fines for bakers baking bread without state monitoring and governmental stamp, for bribing the competent officers of the state, and for bakers who practiced their trade without a state-issued license. Furthermore, the same source material suggests that along with men a significant number of women were engaged in the given profession.

The case of Elijah Capsali, a rabbi of Jewish community who employed women to knead the bread in his bake-houses, constitutes an excellent testimony witnessing that kneading bread was an area in which women were specialised[18]. Of course the professional engagement of women in bread making is primarily verified by notarial documents[19]. In 1524, for instance, Andrea Cornario leased the bakery in the parish of Agios Frangiskos to Frangiskina Rossopoulina, a baker (*furnaree*), for 30 hyperpyra a year[20].

Bakeries were often inherited by women after the death of their husbands. When the widows were not themselves bakers, they kept the family business running by hiring a professional baker, by setting up a partnership with a baker, or by leasing the bakery to a baker[21]. Indeed, some women are referred to as

18. R. Lauer, Jewish Women in Venetian Candia: Negotiating Intercommunal Contact in a Premodern Colonial City, 1300-1500, in: *La cohabitation religieuse dans les villes Européennes, Xe-XVe siècles. Religious Cohabitation in European Towns (10th-15th centuries)*, ed. by J. V. Tolan and St. Boissellier, Turnhout 2014, 293-309, esp. 307. For Jewish women's economic activities, see also B. Arbel, Le donne ebree a Candia alla luce delle fonti testamentarie (1430-1530 *ca.*), *Θησαυρίσματα* 45 (2005) = *Μελέτες προς τιμή της Maria Francesca Tiepolo*, 27-69, esp. 38-40, 58. For more on Elijah Capsali, see K. Tsiknakis, Η εβραϊκή κοινότητα του Χάνδακα στα μέσα του 16ου αιώνα, in: *Άνθη Χαρίτων*, ed. by N. Panagiotakis [Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Library 18], Venice 1998, 729-752, esp. 745-746, with the relevant bibliography.

19. A. Panopoulou, Παρασκευή και πώληση ψωμιού στην πόλη του Χάνδακα (16ος-17ος αι.), in: *Άνθη Χαρίτων* (as in footnote 18), 465-495, esp. 473.

20. Archivio di Stato di Venezia (= ASV), *Notai di Candia*, b. 281 (Zorzi Vasmulo), libro I (1521-1544), f. 232v (18. 7. 1524). Cf. Panopoulou, Παρασκευή και πώληση ψωμιού (as in footnote 19), 487.

21. Panopoulou, Παρασκευή και πώληση ψωμιού (as in footnote 19), 475 and 487, which includes the case of Marieta, the widow of the baker Manea Dadolo, who leased a bake-house in the parish of Agia Foteini to Giorgos Vasalo, who was also a baker, in 1572 for two years in exchange for 10 ducats.

bakery owners. This affair is confirmed by a later unpublished catalogue from 1579 containing the names of all those who could change cechini (venetian gold ducats)[22]. The same document lists the owners of shops (*botteghieri*) in various parts of the city of Candia recording olive oil sellers, retailers, bakers, leather sellers, butchers, Jewish leather merchants, innkeepers and cloth merchants. Of a total of 26 bakers, four were women; of the 28 innkeepers, once again four were women. We can see that the number of women is small compared to the men, but the catalogue did not refer to every baker and innkeeper in the city[23]. The names of those included (Kalergena, Kaliachena, Vlaghena, Lagudena, Thodoricena) indicate that they were possibly either widows or wives of the bakery or inn owner[24]. Certainly, this does not strip them of their professional status, given that their trades are listed alongside their names, just as they are for the men. Besides the names, the most significant information that can be gleaned from the catalogue is that the women in question were in possession of large cash reserves and thus a noteworthy lending ability.

However, an even larger number of women were involved in trade, primarily retail, which on Crete meant trading in cloth, and selling wine, bread and vegetables, but even in buying and selling of slaves.

The protocol of the public notary Angelo de Cartura includes 99 contracts in all relating to trade in slaves. It was indeed the case that in the early Venetian period, several Cretan individuals and families seem to have been heavily involved with the import of slaves. Forty-three residents of Candia are identified

22. ASV, *Duca di Candia*, b. 16 (Bandi), reg. 10 (1566-1570), f. 125v-126v (8. 4. 1570). Cf. Ph. Baroutsos, *Το φορολογικό σύστημα στην Κρήτη το 16ο αιώνα. Η ενοικίαση φόρων και οι επιπτώσεις της*, Unpubl. Ph.D. Thesis, Ionian University / Department of History 2002, 56-57: http://thesis.ekt.gr/13343 (21.03.2018).

23. A number of surviving documents refer to women as owners of professional premises. The most representative example is that of the Jewess Luna, wife of Michiel Rosso, who lived in Candia's Jewish quarter and petitioned the authorities to confirm the transfer to her of a small walled plot for the sale of goods because she had been tortured as a crime suspect, even though she was heavily pregnant at the time. See G. S. Ploumidis, *Αιτήματα και πραγματικότητες των Ἑλλήνων της Βενετοκρατίας* [vol. 1] *1554-1600* [University of Ioannina. School of Philosophy. Department of History and Archaeology. Publications 1], Ioannina 1985, 80, nr. 304.

24. For example, in 1412 Maria *tabernaria* occupied a house *quondam viri sui convinctas*, consisted of a hall (*porticum*), a room (*camera*), a kitchen (*cochina*) and a wine storeroom/shop (*canipa*), see M. Georgopoulou, Private Residences in Venetian Candia (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Centuries), *Θησαυρίσματα* 30 (2000), 95-126, esp. 120 and n. 93.

in these documents as sellers and many more as buyers[25]. Among them, three women are mentioned as sellers and six as buyers[26]. Apart from the Cartura's documents, the female presence in the slave market is confirmed by acts drawn up in Candia by other notaries[27].

A large number of women used to trade in cloth, most of it of local provenance. This is made clear in notarial documents from 1399 by which the nobleman Andrea Zeno purchased large quantities of cloth, mostly *rasia*, from a total of 31 women[28]. From the number of women participated and the fact that 12 of them are listed as being merchants (*mercatrices*) and that the majority of them shared the same place of residence, the parish of Agios Georgios Glyfokarydis, it could be construed that they had banded together into a primitive form of female association for the purpose of selling cloth. In the second half of the fourteenth century, the protocol of the notary Antonio Bresciano contains a number of contracts concerning the retail and wholesale trade in textiles, for the most part woollen, on Crete. Among the merchants involved in the wholesale trade is found Agnes, the widow of Giuliano Zeno, who sells expensive velvets and high-quality clothing. On the other hand Gilda, the widow of Yeronimi Gradonico, was engaged in the retail trade[29]. The acts of the notary Nikolaos Chandakitis show that the retail trade in textiles was larger than the wholesale market and that in 1400-1401 a number of women were active in the retail sector, mostly selling *rascia*[30].

Actually, it was the wine trade that attracted the highest rates of female participation. Young mothers and unmarried women are documented as sellers of wine and other foodstuffs from the fourteenth century on[31], while

25. *The Documents of Angelo de Cartura and Donato Fontanella* (as in footnote 9), xii.

26. *Ibidem*, 16-17, nr. 42, 27, nr. 68, 61, nr. 158, 71, nr. 186 (cf. 67, nr. 175), 69, nr. 180, 181, 155, nr. 404, 171, nr. 443, 211, nr. 544, 220, nr. 565, 228, nr. 14.

27. N. G. Moschonas, Η αγορά των δούλων, in: *Χρήμα και αγορά στην εποχή των Παλαιολόγων*, ed. by Idem [NHRF/Institute for Byzantine Research. Byzantium Today 4], Athens 2003, 249-272, esp. 262.

28. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 47.

29. S. Borsari, Il mercato dei tessuti a Candia (1373-1375), *Archivio Veneto* 178 (1994), 5-30, esp. 11, 13-14, 20, 21, 25.

30. S. Pollastri, Il mercato dei tessuti a Creta alla fine del XIV secolo, *Θησαυρίσματα* 35 (2005), 105-128, esp. 126.

31. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 43. Wine-selling women in retail are also mentioned in Modon in fourteenth century. See C. N. Sathas,

contracts of sale for wine with female sellers through until the sixteenth century are numerous. In 1539 two unmarried women, Paraski, daughter of Iakoumo Don, and Nikoleta, daughter of Nikolo Chortatzis, contracted to sell wine at the shop or storeroom (*μαγαντζέν*) owned by Theodoris Christoforou in the *Palaia Frouta* neighbourhood of Candia in exchange for half the profit from sales[32]. The contracts drawn up between an innkeeper and a *tabernaria* usually include other terms supplementary to the duration of the agreement and the seller's remuneration. The example of Maria de Nigroponte, who in 1320 contracted to work in a wine shop (*cantina*) belonging to Palmerio de Verona for one year in exchange for 15 hyperpyra, is typical. At the same time, her duties included nursing her employer's child to whom his wife was about to give birth. For this particular service, Palmerio agreed to provide food and shelter to Maria and her daughter for as long as she nurses the baby[33]. It is quite clear that, in this case, Maria would be providing the services of a wet nurse in parallel with her other duties.

Wine-selling women often faced prejudice by their employers because they worked in taverns, open spaces and streets. Therefore tavern keepers tried to protect themselves against the possible scams of women through the terms of the contracts. In 1339, Theotokou Theocharopoula undertook to sell wine in the tavern owned by the builder Nikolaos Drakontopoulos in Candia for two years in exchange of 12 hyperpyra per year; additional terms obliged her to sell without deceiving (*et tuum vinum bene et fideliter vendere sine fraude et malo ingenio*) and to settle her account immediately after selling each barrel of wine[34]. Innkeepers preferred to hire unmarried women, clearly at the behest of their clientele, but the need for work used to drive married women to pass themselves off as unmarried, sometimes with their husband's consent.

Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Âge publiés sous les auspices de la Chambre des députés de Grèce [Μνημεῖα Ἑλληνικῆς Ἱστορίας 4], Paris 1882, 128, 141-142.

32. *Μιχαήλ Μαράς. Νοτάριος Χάνδακα. Κατάστιχο 148*, vol. 3: *(2/9 1538-28/2 1539)*, ed. G. K. Mavromatis [Vikelaia Municipal Library. Venetian Fonts of Cretan History 8], Herakleion 2009, 771-772, nr. 987.

33. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 43.

34. *Franciscus de Cruce, Νοτάριος στον Χάνδακα. 1338-1339*, ed. Ch. Gasparis [Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Graecolatinitas nostra-Fonts 1], Venice 1999, 105-106, nr. 120; Ch. G[asparis], Συμβόλαιο εργασίας για πώληση κρασιού σε ταβέρνα, in: *Il miglior vino del mondo. Το κρητικό κρασί στις αρχειακές πηγές της βενετοκρατίας*, ed. by K. G. Tsiknakis, Gasi 2005, 127.

Venetian authorities sought to restrain this phenomenon. A decree of 1320 declared that henceforth: *si aliqua tabernaria maritata ingressa fuerit vendere vinum alicuius persone, tam cum voluntate viri sui quam non, dominacio faciet rationem patronibus huiusmodi tabernarie tamquam si non esset maritata*[35]. As attested to by contracts, selling wine in taverns was often undertaken by married couples. In 1538, for example, Michalis Arkolios and his wife Anitza contracted to sell wine for a year in the tavern owned by Manouil Mouzourakis, which was close to the church of the Kyria ton Aggelon in Candia, in return for half of the profits made on sales. Similarly, Georgis Moustorachos, known as Tsiritas, an inn-keeper, and his wife, signed an agreement with Georgis Gavalas in 1549 to sell wine in a tavern the latter had leased from Saint Catherine's Monastery of Sinai[36].

Increasing numbers of notarial documents relating to the retail sale of bread and wine were signed during the sixteenth century, and especially its second half, as a result of the island's rising urban population and the intense maritime traffic of Cretan harbours. According to acts by the notary Alvise Castano, Tzouanne Theocharis, the tax-farmer of retail sale of wine (*vin a spina*)[37], leased wine selling posts (*πόστα*) in 1599 and 1600 to male and female wine sellers who were obliged to deposit the sum of their rent every month either directly or through Theocharis to the treasury of Candia. In addition, some of these agreements state that the sellers had to purchase small amounts of wine from Theocharis (between one and three barrels per month) at a pre-agreed price, or else the monthly rental of their post would be higher. The selling points were scattered throughout the city's parishes (Agios Ioannis Theologos, Christos Kastouris, Christos Kephalas, Agios Nikolaos Sotiriakis, Agia Paraskevi, Kyria Theoskepasti, Kyria ton Aggelon, Agios Georgios Dorianos and elsewhere) and

35. *Duca di Candia, Bandi (1313-1329)* (as in footnote 17), 105, nr. 285.

36. *Μιχαήλ Μαράς. Νοτάριος Χάνδακα. Κατάστιχο 148*, vol. 3 (as in footnote 32), 713, nr. 913. *Μιχαήλ Μαράς. Νοτάριος Χάνδακα. Κατάστιχο 149*, vol. 4 *(1/10-31/12 1549)*, ed. T. Marmareli and M. G. Drakakis [Vikelaia Municipal Library. Venetian Fonts of Cretan History 10], Herakleion 2005, 277-279, nr. 287.

37. The tax in question was levied on the price at which the wine was sold to the consumer and was paid by the owners of taverns and other places where wine was sold retail. For more details, see Baroutsos, *Το φορολογικό σύστημα* (as in footnote 22), 160-162. Cf. Ε. Ζει, Τα όρια του νόμιμου και του παράνομου. Κρασιά και πορνεία στις ταβέρνες της Βενετίας και του Χάνδακα (14ος-15ος αιώνας), in: *Μονεμβάσιος οίνος – Μονοβασ(ι)ά - Malvasia*, ed. by I. Anagnostakis [NHRF. Institute for Byzantine Research. International Symposium 17/ Οίνον ιστορῶ V], Athens 2008, 71-80, esp. 75-76.

were probably flimsy constructions, wine warehouses and/or homes, since they are referred to in different documents as *την πόστα*, *τον μαγατζέ*, *την πόστα ήγουν το μαγατζέ* and *την πόστα ήγουν το σπίτι*[38]. Other examples include the cases of Ergina Sapsoudena, to whom Theocharis leased the *πόστα απού την σίμερον στέκη της ενορίας της Αγίας Τριάδας* [the post in the place she sells today in the parish of Agia Triada] and Potha Dokinopoula, to whom the post in the parish of Agia Paraskevi was leased[39]. The phrase *απού την σίμερον στέκη* indicates that both Ergina and Potha were already selling wine at the same post with a prior agreement.

A careful reading of the acts illustrates the strict control the authorities exercised over the retail trade, given that the rent for the sales post had to be regularly paid every month directly to the city's treasury, regardless if there were sales or not (*πουλήσι δεν πουλήσι*)[40]. It should be emphasised that the contracts relating to Theocharis reveal a remarkable female presence in the wine retail trade, given that Theocharis' sales network includes no fewer than 33 women[41]. The marital status of these women shows that some were widows, some married and others unmarried, like Kali, the daughter of Nikolos Lalakos[42]. There is also an instance of a mother, leasing a post for her daughter to sell at[43].

Women often moved beyond retail trade and played an active role in economic sectors that were generally a male preserve, including wine wholesaling

38. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 160v (4. 4. 1599), f. 167r-v (3. 5. 1599), f. 169v (15. 5. 1599), f. 171v-172r (22. 5. 1599).

39. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 176r-v (6. 6. 1599), f. 214r (1. 3. 1600), f. 226r (3. 5. 1600).

40. See by way of illustration ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 148r (5. 3. 1599).

41. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 148r (5. 3. 1599), f. 148r-v (5. 3. 1599), f. 148v (5. 3. 1599), f. 149r (7. 3. 1599), f. 152v (15. 3. 1599), f. 155v (20. 3. 1599), 160v (4. 4. 1599), f. 161r (7. 4. 1599), f. 161r-v (16. 4. 1599), f. 161v (16. 4. 1599), f. 165r (26. 4. 1599), f. 166r (31. 4. 1599), f. 167r-v (3. 5. 1599), f. 167v-168r (5. 5. 1599), f. 169v (15. 5. 1599), f. 171v-172r (22. 5. 1599), f. 173v-174r (30. 5. 1599), f. 174r (2. 6. 1599), f. 174v (2. 6. 1599), f. 174v (4. 6. 1699), f. 174v (4. 6. 1599), f. 174v (4. 6. 1599), f. 176r-v (6. 6. 1599), f. 178v (15. 6. 1599), f. 181v (28. 6. 1599), f. 182v-183r (5. 6. 1599), f. 214r (1. 3. 1600), f. 215r (4. 3. 1600), f. 220v (1. 4. 1600), f. 221r (2. 4. 1600), f. 221v (7. 4. 1600), f. 222r-v (11. 4. 1600), f. 223r (15. 4. 1600), f. 224 (24. 4. 1600), f. 226r (3. 5. 1600). Cf. G. V[iolidakis], Ενοικίαση θέσης πώλησης κρασιού, in: *Il miglior vino del mondo* (as in footnote 34), 129.

42. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 152v (15. 3. 1599).

43. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 45 (Alvise Castano), prot. 1 (1599-1600), f. 220v (1. 4. 1600).

and wine producing. Such an example constitutes Kali, the widow of the goldsmith Andrea Agapito[44], who purchased large quantities of wine in the mid fifteenth century, apparently to resell it as a broker, and Agnes Bambacarena, who bought and sold wine in the wholesale market in 1587[45]. The commercial activities of Kali have been adequately studied, but additional archival research is required into the latter's dealings to ascertain the scale of her transactions. The late Maria Piacenda also exploited the by-products of the wine-making process, distilling "raki" (*faceva l'aqua de vita*)[46]. The fact the many women are characterised in the sources as merchants demonstrates that they participated in significant commercial activities and not only in simple sales and purchases. An outstanding example is the case of Donata, wife of Benvenuto, son of the late Pascalino, who used to live in Venice, but in 1305 when the contract was drawn up was resident in Crete. Although both Donata and her husband appear in the contract to receive 20 hyperpyra from Andrea Cornaro formerly of Venice for commerce in Candia, the title "merchant" (*mercadantissa*) was appended to her name alone[47].

It should be noted that throughout the period under consideration, a large portion of the female population were involved in credit and investment activities, which are beyond the scope and aims of this paper.

Before we link female employment to the production sectors, we must first comment on female apprenticeship contracts and places of work. It is worth mentioning that women usually received their technical training without an apprenticeship contract, a practice whereby know-how was passed on. This was a common phenomenon throughout the Western world, with a few exceptions

---

44. M. Gallina, *Una società coloniale del Trecento: Creta fra Venezia e Bisanzio* [Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Venezie. Miscellanea di Studi e Memorie XXVIII], Venice 1989, 134-135; McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 57-64.

45. Ph. Baroutsos, Per il viaggio de ponente. Το κρητικό κρασί πέρα από το Γιβραλτάρ (16ος αι.), in: *Επικοινωνίες και μεταφορές στην προβιομηχανική περίοδο. ΙΑ΄ Συμπόσιο Ιστορίας και Τέχνης, Κάστρο Μονεμβασίας, 23-26 Ιουλίου 1998*, Athens 2001, 105-123, esp. 117.

46. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 173 (Pietro Mangafuri), 1583-1595, f. 111r-v (22. 3. 1593). Cf. Ph. Baroutsos, Στη σκιά του μοσχάτου και της μαλβαζίας. Τα κρητικά αποστάγματα το 16ο αιώνα, in: *Μονεμβάσιος οίνος* (as in footnote 37), 367-381, esp. 375, 378.

47. *The Documents of Angelo de Cartura and Donato Fontanella* (as in footnote 9), 13-14, nr. 35. On the status and activities of women merchants in Venice, see P. Clarke, Le 'mercantesse' di Venezia nei secoli XIV e XV, *Archivio Veneto* VI s. 3 (2012) = *Donne, lavoro, economia a Venezia e in Terraferma tra medioevo ed età moderna*, ed. by A. Bellavitis and L. Guzzetti, 67-84, esp. 67-71.

–when, for example, the training has to do with precious raw materials or to professions under strict regulation by the state[48]. The absence of apprenticeship contracts does not, therefore, indicate a lack of technical knowledge and know-how by the women. Santschi's study demonstrates that the greatest part of 49 contracts aforementioned is related to maids (28) and wet-nurses (10)[49], while only eight apprenticeship contracts are related to weavers (5), shoemakers (2), coat/cloak makers (*juparia*) (1), and tanners (1)[50]. Since contracts of apprenticeship for women in craft workshops are few in number, it was thus argued that they must have learned their craft at home and exercised it solely for the needs of the household –the apprenticeship contracts that were studied at that time related to craft training in a domestic setting– and that there was no

48. See in more detail ZANOBONI, Il lavoro femminile in Italia (as in footnote 1), 142, 170-175; EADEM, Mobilità sociale e lavoro femminile (as in footnote 8), 57-61. On the woman's apprenticeship contract, see A. BELLAVITIS, Apprentissages masculins, apprentissages féminins à Venise au XVIe siècle, *Histoire Urbaine* 15 (2006), 68-73; EADEM, Maestre e apprendiste a Venezia tra Cinque e Seicento, *Archivio Veneto* VI s. 3 (2012): *Donne, lavoro* (as in footnote 47), 127-144. For a more extensive bibliography, see https://garzoni.hypotheses.org/bibliographie/apprentissage-et-histoire-des-femmes (16.01.2017).

49. In reality, a large number of women were active in the health sector and offered their services as midwives, wet-nurses and maids. See MALTEZOU, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας (as in footnote 2), 73-74; A. PAPADIA-LALA, Οικιακή εργασία στο αστικό περιβάλλον της κρητικής κωμωδίας, in: *Δάφνη. Τιμητικός τόμος για τον Σπύρο Α. Ευαγγελάτο*, ed. by I. VIVILAKIS, Athens 2001, 241-250, esp. 244; K. E. LAMBRINOS, Οι γυναίκες της ανώτερης τάξης στη βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη. Νομικο-κοινωνική θέση, αντιλήψεις, συμπεριφορές (16ος-17ος αι.), *Μεσαιωνικά και Νέα Ελληνικά* 7 (2004), 103-122; G. K. VARZELIOTI, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή: Σχέση σκηνικής εικόνας και κοινωνίας στο βενετοκρατούμενο Χάνδακα* [Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Tommaso Flanghini 5], Athens-Venice 2011, 83-111 and K. KONSTANTINIDOU, Η εμπορευματοποίηση του γυναικείου στήθους: Επαγγελματίες τροφοί στο Εκθετοτροφείο της Κέρκυρας, *Περί Ιστορίας* 6 (2013), 57-68. In the health sector, midwives were in possession of specialised knowledge, as were the experience-based female physicians whose profession is attested to throughout the period under consideration. For example, Agnes Vidopoula is referred to in contracts as a *γιάτρενα τζηρόικη/medica ceroica*: ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 225 (Filippo Sclenza di Giorgio), 1585-1594, f. 2r-v (8. 6. 1585) and b. 200 (Zorzi Petropoulo), libro 6 (1585-1587), f. 26v (12. 6. 1585). See also E. SANTSCHI, Médecine et justice en Crète vénitienne au XIVe siècle, *Θησαυρίσματα* 8 (1971), 17-48, esp. 19. Cf. MCKEE, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 44.

50. SANTSCHI, Contrats du travail et d'apprentissage (as in footnote 3), 60.

specialised female artisanal workforce which engaged in wide-ranging activities in trade and various professions.

Thus, while the "post-Santschi" bibliography has already added more contracts of apprenticeship for women, there still remain far fewer in number than those relating to men. However, the existence of a few female apprenticeship contracts is not consistent with the content of a 1526 state decree. According to this, it was forbidden for master artisans –men and women (*maistri et homini et femine*)– and the inhabitants of the parish of Christos Kephalas, where a number of workshops must have been concentrated, and other neighbourhoods in Candia to send their apprentices (*garzoni*) and their servants (*famegli et fameglie*) to throw dung and other waste onto the street (*cale*) which led to the Captain's palace[51] (*palazo*), which had recently been cleaned at the expense of Angelo de Zuanne and the pharmacist Sigismondo[52]. Afterwards in the same document, the artisans are named as shoemakers and tailors (*caligeri*, *sartori*), while the apprentices are divided in *garzoni* and *garzone* (or *garzon over garzona*)[53]. We do not know if this distinction was already in force during the preceding period. It is likely that there were changes in the way in which technical knowledge was handed on in the craft and manufacturing sectors between the fourteenth and sixteenth century, especially in tailoring and shoemaking. Furthermore, the term *garzona*, as well as the fact that the same provisions were applied to masters and apprentices of both sexes, who are listed side by side, would imply that at least the crafts in question were taught in a workshop at the side of an established master artisan. It thus seems likely that further archival research will bring additional documents shedding light on how women acquired technical knowledge, a research field not sufficiently elucidated by the apprenticeships.

---

51. On the captain's mansion, see G. Gerola, *Monumenti veneti dell'isola di Creta*, vol. 3, Venice 1917, 17-18; I. Th. Steriotou, Ο Χάνδακας πριν από τη μεγάλη πολιορκία σε σχέδιο του Μανέα Κλόντζα, *Θησαυρίσματα* 26 (1996), 225-240, esp. 231, nr. 40; Ch. Gasparis, Μητροπολιτική εξουσία και αξιωματούχοι των αποικιών. Ο καπιτάνος Κρήτης (14ος-15ος αι.), *Σύμμεικτα* 12 (1998), 171-214, esp. 175-176; M. Georgopoulou, *Venice's Mediterranean Colonies. Architecture and Urbanism*, Cambridge 2001, 83, fig. 51, 85.

52. He is identified with Sigismundo di Pocaterra, see A. Panopoulou, Φαρμακεία και φαρμακοποιοί του Χάνδακα (16ος-17ος αι.), in: *Πεπραγμένα Η' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Ηράκλειο, 9-14 Σεπτεμβρίου 1996)*, vol. 2/2: *Βυζαντινή και Μεσαιωνική περίοδος*, Herakleion 2000, 129-141, esp. 140; Eadem, *Συντεχνίες και θρησκευτικές αδελφότητες* (as in footnote 5), 181.

53. ASV, *Duca di Candia*, b. 15 (Bandi), reg. 6 (1518-1526), f. 185v (25. 3.1526).

After all, during this period people used to live and work in the same place, and the learning of a craft was part of the everyday activities both in an artisan's workshop and their home[54]. In addition, although some female artisans worked in or operated workshops, their usual place of work was definitely the home, where they retain their autonomy and could combine the practice of their craft with housekeeping.

Numerous sources refer to women as *maistra/mastorissa*, a title which clearly conveys their acknowledged skills and experience, which in many professions extended beyond the purely technical ability[55]. This particular title was also held by foreign craftswomen who had settled in Crete, such as weaver (*magistra tessure*) Melitini from Milos, resident of Rethymnon[56]. The highest proportion of female "masters" is found in the tailoring sector, where women participated as experts to estimate dowries products[57]. Frequently, however, *στιμαδόρισσες μπρατικές* were called upon for estimates, mainly in rural areas[58]. It should be noted that in cities such estimations were usually made by men, specifically by the master tailors who were salaried and elected for life by the authorities[59].

54. D. Degrassi, *L'economia artigiana nell'Italia medievale*, Rome 1998, 48, 50; Varzelioti, *Κρητική κωμωδία και καθημερινή ζωή* (as in footnote 49), 94-96.

55. A notarial document from 1584 mentions a midwife as a *μαστόρισσα*, see Maltezou, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας (as in footnote 2), 73-74. On female "masters", see A. Caracausi, *Dentro la bottega. Culture del lavoro in una città d'età moderna*, Venice 2008, 50.

56. *Zuane Longo. Publicus notarius Candide et Rethimi. Συμβολαιογραφικές πράξεις: Ρέθυμνο 1487-1490, Χάνδακας 1496-1511/12, Διαθήκες: Χάνδακας 1479-1480, Ρέθυμνο 1487*, ed. A. F. van Gemert [Vikelaia Municipal Library. Venetian Fonts of Cretan History 12], Herakleion 2017, vol. 1, 48, n. 97.

57. By way of illustration: in 1536, Paulina, the widow of Janni Moraiti, *maistra sartora*: ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 123 (Michiel Geriti), 1535-1537, f. 138r-v (4. 11. 1536); in 1594, Ergina Limena, *maistra estimatrice*: b. 128 (Pietro Gaitani detto Maruli), protocollo 3 (1591-1594), f. 152r-v (21. 4. 1594); in 1599, Ergina Fanuriopulla, *maestra*: b. 128 (Pietro Gaitani detto Maruli), libro 6 (1599-1600), f. 37v-38v (1. 9. 1599). The latter undertook to evaluate the dowry along with the tailor Georgio Tonisto and the goldsmith Zorzi Protopsalti. For more examples, see I. Chatzakis, Νόμος και ένδυμα στη βενετική Κρήτη. Σκέψεις και παρατηρήσεις με αφορμή κάποιες κανονιστικές διατάξεις για την πολυτέλεια, *Επετηρίς του Κέντρου Ερεύνης της Ιστορίας του Ελληνικού Δικαίου* 45 (2014-2015), 207-287, esp. 212-213, n. 26.

58. Maltezou, Ἡ παρουσία τῆς γυναίκας (as in footnote 2), 67.

59. A. Panopoulou, Οι πρωτομάστορες του Χάνδακα (16ος-17ος αι.), in: *Πεπραγμένα Θ΄ Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*, vol. 2/1: *Βυζαντινή και Μεταβυζαντινή περίοδος. Ιστορία, Γλώσσα και Λογοτεχνία*, Herakleion 2004, 257-270, esp. 263-264.

Since women were widely engaged in the weaving and spinning sectors, scholars often identify their place of work with their home and argue that women were not visibly present in the marketplace and its commercial activities. Relying on the archival material in question, weaving does indeed appear to have been practised in the home. However, it is quite clear that women were active in the marketplace both in Byzantium and the West[60]. Their presence was dictated by their financial needs and not by the stereotypes and views espoused by the upper social strata of the era, according to which a woman's place was in the home[61].

In addition to women's presence inside the workshops, bakeries and taverns as detailed above, the case of the Jewish saleswoman Eirini Marena reveals a more visible activity. In 1451 she rented the area in front of the workshop of the goldsmith Nikolaos Tiganitas for 14 soldi a week[62]. The catalogue from 1579 mentions the *banchi de hebree*, meaning that there were permanent stalls in the marketplace for Jewish women to sell their products[63]. Notarial acts and wills testify also women witnesses who were resellers (*venderigole*)[64]. In this

60. A. E. Laiou, The Role of Women in Byzantine Society, *JÖB* 31/1 (1981) (=*XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4.-9. Oktober 1981. Akten, Hauptreferate* I/1), 233-260, esp. 246 (= Eadem, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, I); Eadem, Women in the Marketplace of Constantinople (10th-14th Centuries), in: *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. by N. Necipoğlu [The Medieval Mediterranean 33], Leiden-Boston-Cologne 2001, 261-273 (= A. E. Laiou, *Women, Family and Society in Byzantium*, ed. by C. Morrisson and R. Dorin [Variorum Reprints], Farnham-Burlington 2011, IV).

61. On the gendered nature of market spaces, see D. Romano, Gender and the Urban Geography of Renaissance Venice, *Journal of Social History* 23/2 (1989), 339-353, where he examines views on the spaces in which elite women were present (the home, parish, convent), without any particular reference to working women. See also R. C. Davis, The Geography of Gender in the Renaissance, in: *Gender and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by J. Brown and R. C. Davis, London 1998, 19-38; E. Welch, *Shopping in the Renaissance*, London 2005, 32-41.

62. M. Konstantoudaki-Kitromilidou, In apotheca aurificum: Εργαστήρια, παραγγελίες και χρήσεις έργων αργυροχρυσοχοΐας στον Χάνδακα (14ος-15ος αι.). Έγγραφα από τα Κρατικά Αρχεία Βενετίας, *Θησαυρίσματα* 41/42 (2011/2012), 361-385, esp. 369. The leasing of the space in front of workshops for selling various goods was a common practice, see Panopoulou, Craftsmen, Tools and Workshops (as in footnote 5), 96.

63. ASV, *Duca di Candia*, b. 16 (Bandi), reg. 10 (1566-1570), f. 125v-126v (8. 4. 1570).

64. *Pietro Pizolo, Notaio in Candia*, vol. 1 (*1300*), ed. S. Carbone [Comitato per la pubblicazione delle fonti relative alla storia di Venezia. Fonti per la storia di Venezia. Sez. III-Archivi Notarili], Venice 1978, 39-40, nr. 74. Cf. Maltezou, Η παρουσία της γυναίκας

occupation were employed women and men who used to buy goats, lambs, poultry, eggs or other goods from producers to sell them for a profit at open-air markets[65]. All these documents prove that women were active in open space and throughout the retail trade sector.

The same conclusion can be drawn from the network of female sellers maintained by the aforementioned Tzouanne Theocharis. This case not only allows us to place the sales points for wine within the city, but also reveals the physical presence of married women, widows and young girls as well, in busy parts of the Cretan capital including the markets, harbour and churchyards.

Women's significant participation in the agricultural sector, which, though neglected by the research[66], can be drawn from a careful investigation of the notarial acts. In countryside a woman acted either by helping her husband in the cultivation of their land or by practicing this work on her own. Indeed, among the agrarian numerous population there were women who used to cultivate large tracts of land and sell their produce, marketing their products by themselves or through middle-men. In 1567 for example, Sofia, the widow of Giorgis Mousouros from the village of Karteros, signed an agreement in order to supply the fruit seller Giannis Salonikios with 6.000 Seville oranges and 1.000 lemons per day from her *zardin*. She received 12 hyperpyra as an advance payment and was obliged to transport the fruit, which had to be *boni* and acceptable, to the city square, where the buyer's shop was located, between Christmas and the end of February. Furthermore, she was not permitted to sell of her products to anyone else. The price for Seville oranges was agreed at one mocenigo per thousand oranges, while that of lemons was 90 soldi per thousand. The quantity of fruits indicates that Sofia owned a large orchard in the fertile area on the banks of the river Karteros. It is also interesting that she was obliged to transport the products to the square on a daily basis (*alla giornata*)[67].

(as in footnote 2), 76; *Wills from Late Venetian Crete, 1312-1420*, ed. S. McKee, Washington, D.C. 1988, vol. 1, 93, nr. 71, 395, nr. 300; vol. 2, 534, nr. 411, 710, nr. 560, 796, nr. 628.

65. ASV, *Duca di Candia*, b. 15bis (Bandi), reg. 9 (1538-1543), f. 219v-220v (20. 11. 1543) and b. 16 (Bandi), reg. 13 (1609-1611), f. 26v-27v (1. 9. 1609).

66. Recent female skeletons analysis revealed that the village women were engaged in heavy labour and in sustained physical activity: Sh. E. J. Gerstel, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium. Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*, New York 2015, 93-94.

67. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 195 (Antonio Pantaleo), libro 3 (1566-1568), f. 17r-v (20. 12. 1567). A later document refers to Helena Clinarati, who practiced the profession of *zardinerra*: ASV, *Duca di Candia*, b. 39bis-40 (Memoriali-Serie II), reg. 47 (1579), f. 78r (13. 7.1579).

In addition to agricultural labours, women's participation in this area includes a wide variety of activities. In the sixteenth century Venice realised the installation of new salt-works in Chania, which required many hands. The authorities to solve the problem put in practice the traditional system, which means they enforced personal labour on the rural population. This caused the reactions of the peasants who preferred their ordinary farming activities to salt making, and sent their wives in the salt-works instead of themselves[68].

The study of the published and largely unpublished archival documents leads us to conclude that female employment in Crete was directly linked to the island's economy. Specifically:

The abundance of raw materials on the island led to the development of both the secondary sectors of the local economy and the trade of their products as well. The large live stock production helped the emergence of flourishing leather processing and shoemaking industries. It has been shown that both activities remained profitable over time, which explains the continuous state control over leather quality and the double taxation on them[69]. The processing of leathers and their trade was largely undertaken by Jews, including women who were engaged in both artisanal activity and commercial transactions[70]. The growth of the tanning sector was aided by the availability of technical infrastructure, such as the mills, located in the Jewish quarter (*Iudaica*), which produce the

68. J.-Cl. Hocquet, *Le sel et la fortune de Venise*, vol. 1: *Production et monopole*, Lille ²1982, 127. For female labourers in salt-works, see M. Kolyva-Karaleka, Οι αλυκές στη Ζάκυνθο: παραγωγή και εκμετάλλευση (16ος αι.), *Τα Ιστορικά* 6/10 (June 1989), 47-74, esp. 53. See also J.-Cl. Hocquet, Technologie du marais salant et travail du saunier dans la lagune de Venise au Moyen Age, *Studi Veneziani* n.s. IX (1985), 15-41, esp. 38-39; Zanoboni, Il lavoro femminile in Italia (as in footnote 1), 165-166.

69. Gasparis, Οι επαγγελματίες του Χάνδακα (as in footnote 5), 114-118; Baroutsos, *Το φορολογικό σύστημα* (as in footnote 22), 47-48, 50; M. Gallina, Un aspetto poco noto dell'economia veneto-cretese: Il commercio delle pelli nella seconda metà del trecento (dai registri notarili candioti), *Θησαυρίσματα* 39/40 (2009/2010), 57-89, esp. 74-75.

70. For Jewish women's presence in tanneries, see Sp. Theotokis, Ἰάκωβος Φωσκαρίνης ἢ ἡ Κρήτη τὸ 1570, *ΕΕΚΣ* 1 (1938), 186-206, esp. 201 and Chr. Maltezou, Η γυναίκα στη Βενετοκρατούμενη Κρήτη με βάση τις Νοταριακές πηγές, *Αρχαιολογία*, issue 21, September, October, November 1986, 37-40, esp. 37. On the leather transactions, in which Jewish women were involved, see Gallina, Un aspetto poco noto dell'economia (as in footnote 69), 71 and n. 81.

necessary milled acorns for tanning[71]. Moreover, the apprenticeship contracts reveal that tanning and shoe-making were two professional activities in great demand in Crete[72]. The growth of shoemaking was also enforced by the range of the available raw materials, for example goat, kid and lamb leathers[73].

With respect to weaving, women take advantage both by the availability of raw materials (wool, silk, cotton, linen) and their technical expertise. The survey of the fourteenth and fifteenth-century archival sources shows that women's engagement with that sector extended beyond the boundaries of the household since the textiles they produced were not solely for their own use, but also for trade[74]. As already mentioned above, cloth called *rascia* was in a significant part produced by women. *Rascia* was a thick, fluffy fabric usually made out of white or black sheep's wool with a great range of uses[75]. It was primarily produced and sold on Crete[76]. Moreover, the reference in notarial acts to a cylinder used in the finishing of woollens, which had been rented from the state[77], suggests that island textile manufacture was mechanised and included the pressing stage of cloths –to make them uniform and smooth– apart from the weaving. The

71. Ch. Gasparis, *Η γη και οι αγρότες στη μεσαιωνική Κρήτη. 13ος-14ος αι.* [NHRF/ Institute for Byzantine Research. Monographs 4], Athens 1997, 105; Gallina, Un aspetto poco noto dell'economia (as in footnote 69), 73-74.

72. Santschi, Contrats du travail et d'apprentissage (as in footnote 3), 62; S. McKee, *Uncommon Dominion: Venetian Crete and the Myth of Ethnic Purity*, Philadelphia 2000, 94-95; Gallina, Un aspetto poco noto dell'economia (as in footnote 69), 60-61, 66, 73-74, n. 99; A. Panopoulou, Παιδική ηλικία και διάρκεια μαθητείας στην Κρήτη, 16ος-17ος αι., in: *Πεπραγμένα Ι' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου (Χανιά, 1-8 Οκτωβρίου 2006)*, vol. 2/1: *Βυζαντινή και Μεταβυζαντινή Περίοδος (Ιστορία)*, ed. by M. Andrianakis, Chania 2010, 319-339, esp. 332-333.

73. Gasparis, Οι επαγγελματίες του Χάνδακα (as in footnote 5), 112; Panopoulou, Craftsmen, Tools and Workshops (as in footnote 5), 87.

74. McKee, Women under Venetian Colonial Rule (as in footnote 4), 47, 48-49.

75. Koukoules, Συμβολή (as in footnote 6), 42, 47, n. 7; Vitali, *La moda a Venezia* (as in footnote 6), 321 [*Rassa, Rascia*].

76. However, the wool as raw material was exported to Venice, as there are frequent references in sources about *lana de Creta*, see F. Thiriet, *La Romanie vénitienne au moyen âge. Le développement et l'exploitation du domaine colonial vénitien (XIIe-XVe siècles)*, Paris ²1975, 325 and n. 1.

77. D. Jacoby, Jews and Christians in Venetian Crete: Segregation, Interaction, and Conflict, in: *«Interstizi»: Culture ebraico-cristiane a Venezia e nei suoi domini dal medioevo all'età moderna*, ed. by U. Israel, R. Jütte and R. C. Mueller, Rome 2010, 243-279, esp. 264-265.

existence of "mechanisms", which are called *mangana* or *kilindra*, is confirmed through decrees issued by the local Venetian authorities in fourteenth century[78].

Silk production in Crete was limited in quantity and not of prime quality during the fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Only silk accessories (belts, scarves, headscarves etc.) were manufactured in the island[79]. An inventory for example of the contents of a Venetian home in 1404 includes namely Cretan headscarves (*Item faziola de Candida tristia duo*)[80]. It is also well-known the production of silk headscarves in the area of Chania in the sixteenth century for export to Constantinople[81]. Documentation of large quantities of silk produced in the region of Rethymno is worthy of attention. Giacomo Forcarini, the *provveditore generale, sindico e inquisitore* sent to Crete in 1574, notes in his report that *nel territorio di Rethimo solamente se ne fa quantità grande* of silk[82]. This information was also reported by other Venetian officials, who, however, stressed that the quality of Chania silk was superior[83]. In addition, Zuanne Papadopoli in his work entitled *L'Occio* refers twice to a similar production in Rethymnon. He writes that they were the city inhabitants that were engaged in silk production and that some forms of silk (*tabbini, canevazzette, veludi)* were

78. Ch. Gasparis and A. Panopoulou, Mill systems in Venetian Crete (forthcoming).

79. D. Jacoby, Candia between Venice, Byzantium and the Levant: the Rise of a Major Emporium to the Mid-Fifteenth Century, in: *The Hand of Angelos* (as in footnote 12), 38-47, esp. 46.

80. P. G. Molmenti, *La storia di Venezia nella vita privata dalle origini alla caduta della Repubblica*, vol. 1: *La grandezza*, Trieste ⁷1973 (prima ristampa), 516, nr. VIII; D. Jacoby, Creta e Venezia nel contesto economico del Mediterraneo orientale sino alla metà del Quattrocento, in: *Venezia e Creta, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi*, ed. by G. Ortalli, Venice 1998, 73-106, esp. 91 (= D. Jacoby, *Commercial Exchange across the Mediterranean: Byzantium, the Crusader Levant, Egypt and Italy* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2005, VII); Idem, Candia between Venice (as in footnote 79), 46 and n. 41.

81. G. S. Ploumidis, Η έκθεση του ρέκτορα Χανίων Λεονάρδου Λορεντάν (1554), *Κρητικά Χρονικά* 24 (1972), 435-447, esp. 438. Cf. B. Arbel, Riflessioni sul ruolo di Creta nel commercio mediterraneo del Cinquecento, in: *Venezia e Creta* (as in footnote 80), 245-259, esp. 250.

82. V. Lamansky, *Secrets d'État de Venise. Documents, extraits, notices et études servant à éclaircir les rapports de la Seigneurie avec les Grecs, les Slaves et la Porte Ottomane à la fin du XVe et au XVIe siècle*, vol. 2, Saint Petersburg 1884, repr. New York 1968, 639.

83. *Relazione di Domenico Marcello, ritornato di consigliere di Candia, delle cose di quel Regno, 1574, 3 maggio*, Venezia 1858, 15. Cf. I. G. Giannopoulos, *Η Κρήτη κατά τον τέταρτο βενετοτουρκικό πόλεμο (1570-1571)*, Athens 1978, 76, n. 2.

manufactured in the city, though not of good quality, especially as regards their colours[84]. On the other hand, we do have evidence for several textile dyers in the town, among them a Jewish woman, Chrussi from Modon, who bought a large amount of indigo (*endego*)[85].

As far as the trade of textiles is concerned, Crete was an essential storage and transit station between the thirteenth and mid-fifteenth centuries. The capital city of Candia, in particular, functioned as an import/export port centre and as a place for refitting and transit, stockpiling and storage of the traded goods[86]. This was a great advantage for Cretan merchants. In addition, the lack of a domestic production of good-quality textiles led to an increase in imports[87], which in turn stimulated the retail cloth trade. The demand for expensive imported textiles continued to increase despite Venetians sumptuary laws[88]. From the second half of the fifteenth century onwards, references become increasing common to the *draperio*[89], a professional specialised in selling luxury cloth. The majority of them were foreigners who had settled in Candia (Antonio Dariva, Orlandos de Orlandi, Zuanne de Bartholomio, Girardo di Bazi et al.)[90], and their shops selling imported fabrics were located in the centre of the city[91]. It was thus inevitable that women would also be involved in the retail sale of both local and imported textiles.

The tailoring sector, which has not been well researched so far, continued to grow and employ a sizeable workforce[92]. Among the professions involved

84. *Memories of Seventeenth-century Crete: L'Occio (Time of Leisure) by Zuanne Papadopoli*, ed. A. VINCENT [Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Graecolatinitas nostra-Fonts 8], Venice 2007, 171, 217.

85. *Zuane Longo. Publicus notarius Candide et Rethimi* (as in footnote 56), 55.

86. JACOBY, Creta e Venezia (as in footnote 80), 105-106; IDEM, Candia between Venice (as in footnote 79), 43-45.

87. JACOBY, Candia between Venice (as in footnote 79), 46.

88. KOUKOULES, Συμβολή (as in footnote 6), 39-42; JACOBY, Candia between Venice (as in footnote 79), 46 and more analytically in CHATZAKIS, Νόμος και ένδυμα (as in footnote 57), 239, 268-275.

89. TSIRPANLIS, *"Κατάστιχο Ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ Μοναστηριῶν τοῦ Κοινοῦ"* (as in footnote 6), 92, 259.

90. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 125 (Michel Geriti), 1545-1546, f. 372v (31. 3. 1546); b. 199 (Zorzi Petropoulo), libro 3 (1577-1579), f. 67v (19. 2. 1578); b. 168 (Andrea Mauroianni), 1559-1591, f. 49v-50r (18. 5. 1578).

91. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 250bis (Demetrio Sclenza), libro 8 (1565-1569), f. 217v (22. 3. 1567), which refers to *draparia appresso la lozza nova*.

92. SANTSCHI, Contrats du travail et d'apprentissage (as in footnote 3), 62-63; MCKEE,

in that sector was the *jupparia*, already discussed above, which exploits the local production of woollen textiles by sewing thick overcoats and cloaks. However, the presence of *jupparia* gradually decreases in the sources as the standard of living rose in the cities and the tailors adapted to their clients' ever-growing demand for imported woollen and silk clothing made out of better-quality cloth. At the same time, Western tailors also settled in Candia presumably furnishing the local market with more luxurious garments. The tailor Zuan Antonio Benedheto from Tuscany's Lucca, for instance, in 1546 rented a workshop in the central square of Candia city for six months, paying 21 hyperpyra[93]. Apart from tailors, other foreign artisans specialised in accessories construction owned workshops in the city of Candia, such us the manufactures of hats (*capeleri*) and berets (*bereteri*)[94]. Apprenticeships show that residents of the island sent their children to foreign tailors in order to be initiated into the secrets of Western fashion[95].

The great number of contracts for slaves transactions, especially in the fourteenth and fifteenth century, in which women also appear as main signatories, confirms that Venetian Crete was a major slave market and that the port of Candia served as an important way-station in the Mediterranean slave trade. The island itself also absorbed slaves in considerable numbers[96].

Uncommon Dominion (as in footnote 72), 95; PANOPOULOU, Παιδική ηλικία (as in footnote 72), 333.

93. ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 125 (Michiel Geriti), 1545-1546, f. 522r-v (3. 9. 1546).

94. Notarial contracts refer to the workshops of Hieronimo da Milan, *capeler* and Domenego Bisi from Florence, *bereter*: ASV, *Notai di Candia*, b. 39 (Enea Calergi), libro 1 (1569-1577), f. 87v (27. 2. 1573) and b. 256 (Zorzi Papastefanopulo), 1594-1597, f. 114v-115r (24. 10. 1595). For *berete* (caps made out of wool, silk or velvet), see E. STAMOULOU, *Candia and the Venetian Oltremare: Identity and Visual Culture in the Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean*, Unpubl. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Manchester 2011, 118, 128: https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/files/54507923/FULL_TEXT.PDF (21.01.2019). For Domenego Bisi, see A. PANOPOULOU, Χρόνος εργασίας και ελεύθερος χρόνος των επαγγελματιών του Χάνδακα την Ύστερη Βενετική περίοδο, *Σύμμεικτα* 16 (2003-2004), 115-131, esp. 128.

95. For example, in 1545 the tailor Bastian de Venetia would teach his art to Iakovos, son of the butcher Manolis Boufos. See PANOPOULOU, Παιδική ηλικία (as in footnote 72), 334.

96. M. ABRATE, Creta-Colonia veneziana nei secoli XIII-XV, *Economia e Storia* 4/3 (1957), 251-277, esp. 274; CH. VERLINDEN, La Crète, débouché et plaque tournante de la traite des esclaves aux XIVe et XVe siècles, in: *Studi in onore di Amintore Fanfani*, vol. 3, Milan 1962, 593-669.

The sale and purchase of slaves was subject to a high tax rate of one cechini per transaction[97], which means that the women who entered into contracts of this sort had enough capital to invest. However, the slave trade began to decline in the second half of the fifteenth and during the sixteenth century, resulting in the rescinding of the tax in question in 1576[98].

Finally a brief comment can be added about the presence of women in the wine selling sector. Crete produced large amounts of wine since the fourteenth century[99]. The increased exports in Cretan wine (chiefly of the Malvasia grape variety) beyond Gibraltar led to the establishment of direct links between the island and the ports of Portugal, England, Flanders and Danzig after the fifteenth century. Trade links with Constantinople also became stronger, and it was via the Ottoman capital that Cretan wines reached Moldavia and Poland[100]. Consequently the wine selling sector enjoyed a boom and women keep an important place in that activity.

---

97. BAROUTSOS, *Το φορολογικό σύστημα* (as in footnote 22), 175.

98. VERLINDEN, La Crète, débouché (as in footnote 96), 666-668; E. A. ZACHARIADOU, *Trade and Crusade. Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin (1300-1415)* [Hellenic Institute for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Studies in Venice. Library 11], Venice 1983, 160-163; M. GALLINA, Finanza, credito e commercio a Candia fra la fine del XIII secolo e l'inizio del XIV, in: *Memorie dell'Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, serie V, 7-8 (1983-1984), Turin 1986 (= IDEM, *Conflitti e coesistenza nel Mediterraneo medievale: mondo bizantino e Occidente latino* [Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo. Collectanea 18], Spoleto 2003, 373-438, esp. 429-432); ARBEL, Riflessioni sul ruolo di Creta (as in footnote 81), 246; BAROUTSOS, *Το φορολογικό σύστημα* (as in footnote 22), 175. See also A. SOPRACASA, *Costantinopoli e il Levante negli atti del notaio veneziano Giacomo dalla Torre (1414-1416)*, Venice 2015, 53-132.

99. GALLINA, *Una società coloniale del Trecento* (as in footnote 44), 42-43, 92-93, 133-139 and CH. GASPARIS, The Trade of Agricultural Products in the Eastern Mediterranean and Regional Sea Routes from Thirteenth to Fifteenth Century, in: *Handelsgüter und Verkehrswege. Aspekte der Warenversorgung im östlichen Mittelmeerraum (4. bis 15. Jahrhundert), Akten des Internationalen Symposions Wien, 19.-22. Oktober 2005*, ed. by E. KISLINGER, J. KODER and A. KÜLZER [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 388. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 18], Vienna 2010, 93-104, esp. 97, with further bibliography.

100. ARBEL, Riflessioni sul ruolo di Creta (as in footnote 81), 250; U. TUCCI, Il commercio del vino nell'economia cretese, in: *Venezia e Creta* (as in footnote 80), 183-206; BAROUTSOS, Per il viaggio de ponente (as in footnote 45), 105-123; see also the volume *Il miglior vino del mondo* (as in footnote 34), 138-141, 147-149, 154-155, 159-160. On malvasia wine, see the volume *Monemvasian Wine* (as in footnote 37).

It is clear that if female work is to be studied in aggregate, it must be examined in tandem with the overall economic context of the Venetian Crete and after an extensive survey of available archival sources. In such a wide synthetic analysis, many issues, such as the proportion of women participation in the labour market, the wages or the mobility of female workers, need to be incorporated. Therefore, this contribution's ascertainments constitute a first approach to women's occupations in relation to the economic sectors which affected them. To reinforce this interaction between working women and thriving sectors it is useful another example. In a will from 1419 Sofia Zusto is referred to as a rope maker (*filocanapa*), information that is rarely found in the sources[101]. But this craft is linked to the Crete's shipbuilding manufacture that was very important during the Venetian period.

Without abandoning their traditional employment as midwives, wet-nurses, maids and experienced-based physicians, women also oriented their occupations both in agricultural and craft production and in trade. Compared with men, women artisans were fewer, and, with exception of seamstresses, their number was gradually reduced from the late fifteenth to the sixteenth century. The largest part of working women were engaged in trade, mainly retail, in which their participation appears to increase in the second half of the sixteenth century. Although women were organised into sales networks, however, heads of these networks were men. The scale of female involvement in the above-mentioned sectors was a consequence of their products' demand in the local market, but also by foreign traders; it was also the outcome of the constantly rising demand for consumer goods in the island's urban centres. As a result, female work was more vulnerable to economic shifts on Crete between the fourteenth and sixteenth century. Furthermore, based always on our archival sources, it can be concluded that the flourishing sectors of the Cretan economy offered various opportunities for profit to the female population. Women in Crete were seeking low-risk economic activities either with or without men's support both within and beyond the home.

Isabelle Ortega*

Γυναίκες ευγενείς και οικογενειακές στρατηγικές στην Φραγκοκρατούμενη Πελοπόννησο από τον 13ο έως τον 15ο αιώνα

Η ιστορία της γυναίκας, που αποτελεί μία μόνο πτυχή της ιστορίας της οικογένειας, απέκτησε νέα δυναμική χάρις στο αμερικάνικο μοντέλο έρευνας με βάση το κοινωνικό φύλο (gender). Μέσα από αυτή την ερευνητική οπτική προσδιορίζεται η παρουσία και ο ρόλος ανδρών και γυναικών σε κάθε κοινωνία, οι διαφορές μεταξύ τους, ο χώρος στον οποίο δραστηριοποιούνται, καθώς και η νοητική πρόσληψη που συνοδεύει τα δύο φύλα[1].

Το Πριγκηπάτο του Μορέως, ή Πριγκηπάτο της Αχαΐας, δημιουργήθηκε στις αρχές του 13ου αιώνα από Σταυροφόρους που προέρχονταν στην πλειονότητά τους από το ανατολικό τμήμα του βασιλείου της Γαλλίας[2]. Για τον

---

* Maître de Conférences, Université de Nîmes.

Ευχαριστώ την κυρία Yolanda Botrel-Mantzavinou για τη βοήθειά της στη μετάφραση του άρθρου.

Τα γενεαλογικά δέντρα στο τέλος της μελέτης παρουσιάζονται στη γαλλική γλώσσα.

1. J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, London-New York 1990, μετάφρ. στα γαλλικά από E. Fassin, *Le trouble dans le genre. Pour un féminisme de la subversion*, Paris 2005, 5-19.

2. Μ. Ντουρου-Ηλιοπουλου, *Το φραγκικό πριγκιπάτο της Αχαΐας (1204-1432): Ιστορία, οργάνωση, κοινωνία*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2005· A. Papadia-Lala, Society, Administration and Identities in Latin Greece, στο: *A Companion to Latin Greece*, επιμ. N. I. Tsougarakis, P. Lock, Leiden-Boston 2015, 114-144, κυρίως 118-120· P. Lock, *The Franks in the Aegean 1204-1500*, London-New York 1995· M. Kordoses, *Southern Greece under the Franks (1204-1262). A Study of the Greek Population and the Orthodox Church under the Frankich Dominion* [Dodone: Supplement 33], Ioannina 1987. Βλ. επίσης τις μελέτες στους παρακάτω τόμους: *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, επιμ. J. Herrin, G. Saint-Guillain, Farnham 2011· *Liquid and Multiple: Individuals and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, επιμ. G. Saint-Guillain, D. Stathakopoulos [Collège de France - CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 35], Paris 2012· *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, επιμ. B. Arbel, B. Hamilton, D. Jacoby, London-Totowa 1989.

προσδιορισμό της ευγένειας, οι νέοι κάτοικοι του Μορέως εφήρμοσαν το ίδιο σύστημα το οποίο ίσχυε και στην πατρίδα τους και που δεν διαφοροποιούσε την μία γραμμή καταγωγής από την άλλη: οι δύο γραμμές συγγένειας εμπλέκονταν στη μεταβίβαση της ευγένειας και των κληρονομικών δικαιωμάτων, αλλά τα δικαιώματα και των δύο γραμμών δεν ήταν ποτέ εντελώς ταυτόσημα. Το αρχικό αυτό σύστημα ευγένειας τροποποιήθηκε αργότερα, καθώς νέοι ευγενείς και στρατιώτες έφτασαν στην Πελοπόννησο φέρνοντας μαζί τους γυναίκες από την Ισπανία και την Ιταλία. Υπό τις συνθήκες αυτές, ήταν απαραίτητο να επαναπροσδιοριστούν τα δικαιώματα και οι υποχρεώσεις της ευγενούς γυναίκας στην Πελοπόννησο, προκειμένου να καθοριστεί η θέση της στο Πριγκηπάτο[3]. Στα πλαίσια εναρμόνισης με τα νέα αυτά κοινωνικά δεδομένα, οι Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας (*Assises de Romanie*) φανερώνουν την σημασία που προσέδιδαν στη θέση της γυναίκας, καθώς αφιερώνουν στο θέμα αυτό τριάντα πέντε άρθρα τους σε σύνολο διακοσίων δέκα εννέα. Το *Χρονικό του Μορέως*[4], το *Χρονικό των Τόκκων*[5], και άλλες πηγές συμπληρώνουν με ενάργεια την εικόνα της θέσης των ευγενών γυναικών στον Φραγκοκρατούμενο Μορέα[6].

---

3. Η Marie Guérin υποστήριξε πρόσφατα τη διατριβή της με τίτλο *Les dames de la Morée franque XIII^e-XV^e siècle. Représentation, rôle et pouvoir des femmes de l'élite latine en Grèce médiévale*, την οποία δεν είχαμε την ευκαιρία να συμβουλευτούμε έως τώρα.

4. Για το *Χρονικόν του Μορέως*, βλ. T. Shawcross, *The Chronicle of Morea: Historiography in Crusader Greece*, Oxford 2009, 32-48.

5. Βλ. τη μελέτη της Θ. Σανσαριδου-Hendrickx, *The World View of the Anonymous Author of the Greek Chronicle of the Tocco, 14th-15th Centuries* (doctoral thesis, Univ. of Johannesburg, 2000), δημοσιευμένη ηλεκτρονικά https://ujdigispace.uj.ac.za/handle/10210/6312 (τελευταία επίσκεψη Απρίλιος 2018) και ως μονογραφία: Θ. Σανσαριδου-Hendrickx, *Το Χρονικόν των Τόκκων. Έλληνες, Ιταλοί, Αλβανοί και Τούρκοι στο Δεσποτάτο της Ηπείρου (14ος-15ος αιώνας): Η κοσμοθεωρία του άγνωστου συγγραφέα*, Θεσσαλονίκη 2008.

6. *Les Assises*, έκδ. G. Recoura, *Les Assises de Romanie*, Paris 1930 (= *Les Assises*). A. Parmeggiani, *Libro delle uxanze e statuti delo imperio de Romania. Edizione critica* [Quaderni della Rivista di Bizantinistica, 1, C.I.S.A.M.], Spoleto 1998. Για το *Χρονικόν του Μορέως*, βλ. γαλλική παραλλαγή: έκδ. J. Longnon, *Le Livre de la conqueste de la princée de l'Amorée, Chronique de Morée (1204-1305)*, Paris 1911 (= *Le Livre de la conqueste*)· ελληνική παραλλαγή: έκδ. J. Schmitt, *The Chronicle of Morea. A History in Political Verse, Relating the Establishment of Feudalism in Greece by the Franks in the Thirteenth century*, London 1904 (= *The Chronicle of Morea*)· αραγωνέζικη παραλλαγή: έκδ. A. Morel-Fatio, *Libro de los fechos et conquistas del principado de la Morea*, Genève 1885 (= *Libro de los fechos*). *Χρονικὸν τῶν Τόκκων*, έκδ. G. Schirò, *Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia di Anonimo. Prolegomeni, testo critico, traduzione* [CFHB 10], Roma 1975 (= *Cronaca dei Tocco*).

Η μελέτη της θέσης της γυναίκας παρουσιάζει ιδαίτερο ενδιαφέρον, καθώς φωτίζει πτυχές της αριστοκρατικής κοινωνίας του Πριγκηπάτου της Αχαΐας. Η ηλικία τους προσδιόριζε σε μεγάλο βαθμό τη στάση που τηρούσαν απέναντί τους οι στενοί συγγενείς τους. Από το μικρό κορίτσι, για το οποίο έκαναν σχέδια για το μέλλον, έως την χήρα, της οποίας εποφθαλμιούσαν την περιουσία, οι εν λόγω γυναίκες αντιμετωπίζονταν από την μια ως περιουσιακά στοιχεία (assets), και από την άλλη γίνονταν φορείς υποχρεώσεων. Παρά το ότι υπήρχαν εντάσεις κατά την καταβολή της προίκας ή του κλήρου τους (*douaire*) -κρίσιμες στιγμές στο παιχνίδι της κληρονομιάς- η κοινωνική επιρροή των γυναικών διέφερε, καθώς αυτή καθοριζόταν και ήταν άμεσα συνδεδεμένη με το κύρος του γένους (οικογένειας) στο οποίο ανήκαν. Αυτό αποτελούσε καθοριστικό παράγοντα για την ύπαρξη ή μη εντάσεων κατά την καταβολή της προίκας, ή συγκρούσεων κατά την μεταβίβαση της κληρονομιάς.

Για την λεπτομερέστερη μελέτη του θέματος θα εξετάσουμε στη συνέχεια το ρόλο που τα γένη (οι οικογένειες) του Μορέως επεφύλασσαν στις γυναίκες στα διάφορα στάδια της ζωής τους.

I. Από την παιδική ηλικία στην εφηβεία

Οι γυναίκες δεν έχαιραν της ίδιας εκτίμησης στις διάφορες ηλικιακές φάσεις της ζωής τους, δηλαδή την παιδική ηλικία, την εφηβεία, την ωριμότητα και τα γηρατειά[7]. Η σοβαρή έλλειψη πηγών δεν μας επιτρέπει να διαφοροποιήσουμε πάντα με μεγάλη σαφήνεια τα διάφορα ηλικιακά στάδια. Όσον αφορά στην παιδική ηλικία, οι μαρτυρίες είναι σπάνιες, αλλά μερικές βασικές τάσεις μπορούν να ανιχνευτούν. Τα κορίτσια είτε έμεναν κοντά στην μητέρα τους για να μάθουν τον μελλοντικό ρόλο της συζύγου, ή εναλλακτικά εισέρχονταν στο μοναστήρι, για να συμπληρώσουν την μόρφωσή τους. Οι ευγενείς γυναίκες λειτουργούσαν συχνά ως «φύλακες» της οικογενειακής μνήμης, τόσο μέσω της εκπαίδευσης που παρείχαν στα παιδιά τους, όσο και μέσω της αλληλογραφίας που διατηρούσαν με τους συγγενείς τους. Κατ'αυτόν τον τρόπο διαφύλατταν πολύτιμες οικογενειακές μνήμες και τις μεταβίβαζαν στις επόμενες γενεές[8].

---

7. Όπως έχουν καθοριστεί από τον Philippe de Navarre, έκδ. M. De Fréville, *Les quatre âges de l'homme: traité moral de Philippe de Navarre*, Paris 1888.

8. L. Miglio, Lettere dal monastero. Scrittura e cultura scritta nei conventi femminili toscani *del'400*, στο: *Libro, scrittura, documento della civiltà monastica e conventuale nel basso medioevo (secoli XIII-XV), Atti del Convegno di Studio (Fermo 17-19 settembre 1997)*, επιμ. G. Avarucci, R. M. Borraccini Verducci, G. Borri [Centro Italiano di Studi

Όταν το κορίτσι μεγάλωνε και έφθανε στην εφηβική ηλικία, εθεωρείτο αντικείμενο συναλλαγής. Οι διαθέσιμες πληροφορίες είναι πενιχρές· κατά συνέπεια διαθέτουμε πολύ λίγα στοιχεία για τις ενασχολήσεις των αριστοκρατικών γυναικών κατά την συγκεκριμένη περίοδο της ζωής τους. Ωστόσο, η εφηβεία ήταν η ηλικία κατά την οποία καταστρώνονταν τα πρώτα γαμήλια σχέδια. Επειδή ήταν σημαντικό να προφυλαχτεί η παρθενία και να ενσταλάξουν στα νεαρά κορίτσια το νόημα της άμεμπτης ηθικής, μερικά από αυτά στέλλονταν στο μοναστήρι, όπως, για παράδειγμα, συνέβη με την Marguerite de Toucy[9]: *[...] Elle-même, jadis, pendant sa puberté, en partie sous l'impulsion de ses parents, mais surtout du fait de la légèreté de son esprit, est entrée au monastère [...]*[10].

Η απομάκρυνση από την κοσμική ζωή, που αποτελούσε ενίοτε επιθυμία των γονέων, επέτρεπε στα κορίτσια να λάβουν μια σοβαρή εκπαίδευση, η οποία θα τους επέτρεπε να αποκτήσουν πνευματικά εφόδια για την μελλοντική τους ζωή. Ωστόσο, η συγκεκριμένη πρακτική, ευρύτατα διαδεδομένη στους κύκλους των ευγενών, δεν είναι δυνατόν να προσδιοριστεί με αριθμητική ακρίβεια.

Εάν το κορίτσι ήταν ορφανό και ήδη ενήλικο, διήνυε δηλαδή το δωδέκατο έτος της ηλικίας του, μπορούσε να παραλάβει την κληρονομιά του και να δώσει όρκο πίστης και υποτέλειας, όπως έκανε κάθε κάτοχος φέουδου[11]. Ως εκ τούτου, τα κορίτσια γίνονταν αντικείμενο προσοχής ολόκληρου του γένους, που απέβλεπε σε έναν όσο το δυνατό πιο επωφελή γάμο. Οι άνδρες λοιπόν στην πλειονότητά τους επέλεγαν την μελλοντική σύζυγό τους όχι με βάση την ομορφιά της κοπέλας, αλλά με γνώμονα άλλες υλικές σκοπιμότητες. Ωστόσο, η νεάνιδα με την εξωτερική της εμφάνιση αποτελούσε παράγοντα κοινωνικής αναγνώρισης για τον σύζυγό της, πέραν βέβαια της αντίληψης ότι η γοητεία αντικατοπτρίζει μία όμορφη ψυχή. Υπό τις συνθήκες αυτές, δεν είναι τυχαίο ότι οι λιγότερο ωραίες νέες γίνονταν αντικείμενο αυστηρής κριτικής από τους χρονογράφους, ενώ αυτές που διέθεταν φυσική ομορφιά αντικείμενο εγκωμίου[12].

---

sull'Alto Medioevo. Studi e Ricerche. Collana dell'Associazione Italiana dei Paleografi e Diplomatisti 1], Spoleto 1999, 133-163, ιδίως 138.

9. Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 2.

10. *Acta Innocentii IV* (εκδ. T. T. Haluščynskyj, *Acta Innocentii P.P. IV (1243-1254) e registris vaticanis aliisque fontibus collegerunt notisque adornarunt*, ...Città del Vaticano 1962), τόμ. III, αρ. 5647: *[...] petitio continebat quod ipsa olim, infra annos pubertatis existens, non tamen a parentibus tradita, sed animi levitate potius monasterium [...].*

11. *Les Assises*, άρθρο 85.

12. Η φυσική ομορφιά ορισμένων κυριών, ιδιαίτερα της Marulla da Verona, τονίζεται από τον Ramon Muntaner: έκδ. A. De Bofarull y de Brocá, *Crónica catalana de Ramon*

Οι γυναίκες του Πριγκηπάτου υποχρεώνονταν κατά κάποιον τρόπο να παντρευτούν, είτε από την οικογένειά τους, είτε από την φεουδαλική κοινωνία που δύσκολα τις αποδεχόταν ανύπαντρες. Στη χειρότερη περίπτωση μπορούσαν να τους επιτρέψουν να αποχωρήσουν από τον κοσμικό βίο, αλλά αυτή η επιλογή απαντά σπάνια στον Μορέα. Εξάλλου, ο γάμος ήταν προς όφελος της γυναίκας, γιατί ο σύζυγος θα μπορούσε να υπερασπιστεί τα συμφέροντά της. Η συγκεκριμένη ιδέα εντοπίζεται σε μια παπική επιστολή προς τον Λατίνο αρχιεπίσκοπο Μονεμβασίας, ο οποίος το 1252 ασχολήθηκε με την υπόθεση της Marguerite de Toucy, κόρης του Narjot de Toucy[13]: *À propos de la noble Marguerite qui, autrefois, pendant qu'elle était encore pubère, entra dans un monastère cistercien [...]. Elle nous a fait humblement supplier de nous soucier d'apporter un remède à cette situation, car on redoute que ne naisse sur ses terres la discorde, porteuse de dangers pour beaucoup, du fait que certains s'opposent à ce qu'elle contracte un mariage. Nous te demandons [...] de proclamer [...] qu'elle doit pouvoir librement contracter un mariage, sans qu'on s'y oppose, tout en respectant son engagement*[14].

Σύμφωνα με το παραπάνω χωρίο, η περιουσία της Marguerite de Toucy κινδύνευε, γιατί αντί των εγκοσμίων εκείνη είχε επιλέξει το μοναχικό βίο. Αυτή η εξέλιξη ωφέλησε ορισμένους συγγενείς της, οι οποίοι καταχράστηκαν την περιουσία της, καθώς αυτή ήταν άμεσα εκτεθειμένη στην απληστία τους. Υπό αυτές τις αντίξοες περιστάσεις, η νεαρή γυναίκα αντιλήφθηκε την ανάγκη ενός γάμου, προκειμένου ο μέλλων σύζυγός της να υπερασπιστεί τα συμφέροντά της. Έτσι, η Marguerite απηύθυνε επιστολή στον πάπα[15], ο οποίος έδωσε τη

Muntaner, Barcelona 1860, 461: *E daquesta dona hach Nalfonso Fraderich infants assat, e es exida la millor dona e la pus savia que hanch fos en aquell pays. E segurament es de les pus belles chrestianes del mon, que yo la viu en casa de son pare [...]*· έκδ. J.-A. C. Buchon, *Chroniques étrangères relatives aux expéditions françaises pendant le XIIIe siècle*, Paris 1841, 480· γαλλική μετφρ. του κειμένου από J.-M. Barberà, *Ramon Muntaner, Les Almogavres. L'expédition des Catalans en Orient*, Toulouse 2002, 154.

13. Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 2.

14. *Acta Innocentii IV* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 10), τόμ. III, αρ. 5647: *De Margarita nobili quæ olim, infra annos pubertatis, monasterium Cisterciense intravit [...]. Quare nobis ex parte ipsius fuit humiliter supplicatum ut, cum ex eo quod quidam malitiose propter hoc impedimentum opponunt quin ipsa matrimonium contrahat, timeatur ne in partibus illis in multorum periculum discordia oriatur, congruum super hoc adhibere remedium curaremus. Mandamus quatinus, [...], et quod premissis nequaquam obstantibus matrimonium possit libere contrahere, ac in contracto licite remanere.*

15. *Αυτόθι*, τόμ. III, αρ. 5647.

συγκατάθεσή του να εγκαταλείψει τη μονή. Έλαβε λοιπόν την άδεια να επιστρέψει στην κοσμική ζωή και τελικά παντρεύτηκε το ίδιο έτος τον Leonard de Véroli, τον λογοθέτη (*cancellarius*) του Πριγκηπάτου του Μορέως, γνωστό ως Λινάρτ από το *Χρονικόν του Μορέως*[16].

Έλλειψη ελευθερίας χαρακτηρίζει την πλειονότητα των γάμων, κυρίως ως προς το ζήτημα της επιλογής συζύγου. Το *Χρονικόν του Μορέως* είναι σαφέστατο στην περίπτωση της Isabelle de la Roche. Ο αδελφός της, Guy de la Roche[17], την πάντρεψε με έναν Ιταλό ευγενή, τον Hugues de Brienne[18], θέτοντας κατά αυτόν τον τρόπο τα συμφέροντα του κράτους πάνω από τις όποιες προσωπικές προτιμήσεις[19]. Δεν είναι τυχαίο το γεγονός ότι η επικυριαρχία του Καρόλου Ανδεγαυού στην Πελοπόννησο συνέπεσε με τον δεύτερο γάμο της Isabelle de la Roche[20]. Αξίζει να σημειωθεί ότι οι δύο ενδιαφερόμενες πλευρές είχαν δώσει τη συγκατάθεσή τους πριν από το γάμο. Ο προτεινόμενος σύζυγος δεν προερχόταν από τον Μορέα, αλλά ήταν ένας Ιταλός φεουδάρχης· η συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση λοιπόν μάς δίνει την εικόνα μιας κατ' ουσίαν συμμαχίας μεταξύ δύο κρατών[21].

Σύμφωνα με τις *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας*, η γυναίκα «λιζία» (*lige*) είχε την δυνατότητα επιλογής του συζύγου της[22]. Η εφαρμογή της συγκεκριμένης πρακτικής μπορούσε ωστόσο να αμφισβητηθεί, όταν τα συμφέροντα των συγγενών τοποθετούνταν πάνω από το ατομικό συμφέρον. Εξάλλου, η εποπτεία

16. *PLP* 14952.

17. *PLP* 24398.

18. Geoffroy de Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, εκδ. J. DUFOURNET, Paris 2004, 42-43, 56-57, 94-97.

19. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §498, 195: *Mais ne demora mie longuement que li dux Guis de La Roche, qui freres estoit de cell dame, par la voulenté et consentement dou roy et dou prince, si ordina et fist le mariage de celle dame sa suer et du noble homme messire Hugue, le conte de Brene et de Liche, qui lors conversoit [demeurer] en Puille, a la contrée de Liche que le bon roi Charle lui avoit donnée.* Έτσι, το 1267 επιβλήθηκε στη νεαρή Ισαβέλλα Α΄ της Αχαΐας η επιλογή ενός συζύγου σύμφωνα με την εξωτερική πολιτική του Πριγκηπάτου, ενώ ο γάμος της παρουσιάστηκε ως υποχρέωση της κυβέρνησης. Αυτό έγινε προκειμένου να παντρευτεί τον Φίλιππο Ανδεγαυό, κάτι που επέτρεψε στις δύο οικογένειες να έρθουν πιο κοντά: *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §442, 170-171.

20. Μ. ΝΤΟΥΡΟΥ-ΗΛΙΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Η Ανδεγαυική κυριαρχία στη Ρωμανία επί Καρόλου Α΄ (1266-1285)*, Αθήνα 1987.

21. Το πρόγραμμα ANR (Agence nationale de la recherche), με το οποίο συνεργάζομαι, έχει τον τίτλο «Les processus de rassemblement politiques: l'exemple de l'Europe angevine (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle)» και στοχεύει στο να μελετήσει την στενή συνεργασία των δύο κρατών.

22. *Les Assises*, άρθρα 31 και 72.

των γάμων ενισχύει την εικόνα ελέγχου που οι Ανδεγαυοί ασκούσαν στις πριγκήπισσες του Μορέως στα τέλη του 13ου αιώνα: *[...] si fu mis .j. chapitres yteulx [tel] que se par aventure avenist chose, que la princée venist a hoir [héritier] femele, fust pucelle ou vesve, que elle ne se puet marier sans [le] congié [autorisation] et la voulenté dou roy ; et se par aventure le faisoit sans le congié dou roy, que celle dame feust desheritée perpetuelement, et si hoir, de la princée d'Achaÿe*[23]. Ούτε η ενήλικη γυναίκα, ούτε η νεάνιδα μπορούσε να παντρευτεί χωρίς τη συγκατάθεση του ηγεμόνα. Εάν η γυναίκα δεν υπάκουε, τότε τιμωρούνταν αυστηρά χάνοντας τα δικαιώματά της, όπως συνέβη με την Ματθίλδη (Mahaut) de Hainaut το 1318[24].

Η νεαρή γυναίκα είχε αδύναμα σημεία που μερικοί τα εκμεταλλεύονταν. Η οικογένειά της (το γένος της) την παρακολουθούσε, την προστάτευε και τελικά την περιόριζε, ενώ οι υποψήφιοι σύζυγοι είχαν πολύ λίγες δυνατότητες να την απεγκλωβίσουν απο το ασφυκτικό τους πλαίσιο: στην ουσία ο γάμος ήταν η πιο εύκολη λύση, όμως περιστασιακά η απαγωγή μπορούσε να θεωρηθεί επιλογή[25]. Βέβαια, η απαγωγή της γυναίκας, με ή χωρίς τη συγκατάθεσή της, ανήκει στις απαγορευμένες πράξεις της χριστιανικής κοινωνίας και η Εκκλησία κατέβαλλε συνεχώς προσπάθειες να την καταστείλει[26]. Στις δυτικές χριστιανικές κοινωνίες η απαγωγή της αρραβωνιαστικιάς αποτελεί συχνό λογοτεχνικό μοτίβο, αλλά βασίζεται σε πραγματικά γεγονότα και οι κοινωνίες, συμπεριλαμβανομένης και εκείνης του Μορέως, προσφέρουν ορισμένα παραδείγματα. Περί το 1320, η περίπου επτά ετών Hélène de Charpigny, κληρονόμος της Βοστίτσας, και η θεία της Guillemette απήχθησαν από τον Marino Ghisi, άρχοντα της Τήνου. Παρά τις προσπάθειες που καταβλήθηκαν, η Hélène παντρεύτηκε τον αδελφό του απαγωγέα, Bartolomeo II Ghisi, κονόσταυλο (*comestabulus*) του Μορέως[27].

---

23. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §590, 237.

24. *Libro de los fechos* §631-635, 138-139. *PLP* 16001. Βλ. σημ. 13 της παρούσας μελέτης.

25. Στο *Les Établissements de saint Louis*, η παρθενία των νεαρών κοριτσιών βρίσκεται στο επίκεντρο των ανησυχιών και οποιαδήποτε προσπάθεια να δυσφημιστεί κάποιο από αυτά τιμωρείται αυστηρά, βλ. R. Carron, *Enfant et parenté dans la France médiévale, X^e-XIII^e siècle*, Genève 1989, 72. Το ίδιο ίσχυε και στην Ουγγαρία, όπου η καταγγελία βιασμού επέσειε μια από τις αυστηρότερες ποινές. Βλ. M. Molnar, *Histoire de la Hongrie*, Paris 1996, 65. S. Joye, *La femme ravie. Le mariage par rapt dans les sociétés occidentales du Haut Moyen Âge*, Turnhout 2012, 20 και 26.

26. J. Gaudemet, *Le Mariage en Occident. Les mœurs et le droit*, Paris 1987, 172.

27. Ο Bartolomeo Ghisi ήταν ήδη ενήλικας το 1315, οπότε και συνήψε τον πρώτο του δεσμό, βλ. R.-J. Loenertz, *Les Ghisi. Dynastes vênitiens dans l'Archipel, 1207-1390* [Civiltà veneziana. Studi 26], Venise 1975, 135. *PLP* 4175.

Σ'αυτή την περίπτωση, η συγκατάθεση δεν ήταν παρά μόνο κάτι τυπικό και ο άρχοντας της Τήνου δεν ανησύχησε ιδιαίτερα για τη συμπεριφορά του[28].

Αλλά το γεγονός ότι ορισμένες νεαρές γυναίκες ήταν επιθυμητές υποψήφιες νύφες, οφειλόταν κυρίως στην προίκα τους. Ακολουθώντας τους ανθρωπολόγους, οι ιστορικοί χαρακτηρίζουν την απευθείας (άμεση) προίκα, δηλαδή την προσφορά της περιουσίας από την οικογένεια της νύφης τη στιγμή του γάμου, ως έναν τρόπο προεξόφλησης επί της κληρονομίας και την έμμεση προίκα ως την προσφορά της οικογένειας του συζύγου που δίνεται ως αποζημίωση στην άλλη πλευρά. Οι *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας* αναφέρουν ότι: *La femme du traître ne perd pas sa dot [...], après la mort de son mari, elle demandera à juste titre sa dot, sauf si elle a été complice de la trahison*[29]. Η σύζυγος δεν υφίστατο νομικές συνέπειες, όπως αποδεικνύει η περίπτωση της Isabelle de la Roche, που δεν ζημιώθηκε στην περιουσία της όταν πέθανε ο άνδρας της Geoffroy de Briel, αν και εκείνος είχε πολεμήσει εναντίον του θείου του, πρίγκιπα Γουλιέλμου Βιλλεαρδουίνου. Η ίδια δεν θεωρήθηκε συνένοχος των πράξεων του συζύγου της και έλαβε το μισό της αρχοντίας (*seigneurie*) της Καρύταινας[30].

Εάν η προίκα ήταν εξασφαλισμένη, η νεαρή γυναίκα δεν δεσμευόταν αμετάκλητα στη συμμαχία. Όμως το πιο σημαντικό ήταν να καθοριστεί η αξία της συνεισφοράς της, κάτι που μπορούσε να αποδειχθεί αρκετά δύσκολο. Η γαλλική παραλλαγή του *Χρονικού του Μορέως* αναφέρει με σαφήνεια ότι η προίκα, που ο Guillaume de Villehardouin άφησε στην κόρη του Marguerite, αποτελούνταν από το *chastel de Mathegriphon et lez .ij. pars de la baronnie*[31]. Σε πολλές περιπτώσεις, η προίκα συνίστατο από φρούρια, φέουδα, αλλά σε κάθε περίπτωση αντιπροσώπευε μια σημαντική ατομική συνεισφορά στο γάμο: *Et parmi les paiements qui doivent se faire aux créanciers, la femme doit être remboursée avant tous de ses apports et de son augment de dot*[32]. Δεν είναι τυχαίο λοιπόν υπό τις συνθήκες αυτές ότι μετά το θάνατο του συζύγου επιβαλλόταν στους κληρονόμους να επιστρέψουν στην χήρα την περιουσία της, κινητή και

28. Παρά τα κατασταλτικά μέτρα που έλαβαν οι βενετικές αρχές, η διαδικασία κινούνταν αργά. Πολλές νομικές διαδικασίες ήταν ακόμη σε εξέλιξη την δεκαετία του 1330: LOENERTZ, *Ghisi*, ό. π., 128-130. Εξάλλου όλα δείχνουν ότι η Hélène έμεινε κοντά στον σύζυγό της.

29. *Les Assises*, άρθρο 97.

30. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §497, 194-195.

31. *Αυτόθι*, §531, 210-211.

32. *Les Assises*, άρθρο 124.

ακίνητη. Το γεγονός ότι οι *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας* σημειώνουν τη συγκεκριμένη πρακτική οφείλεται στο ότι η πραγματικότητα ήταν διαφορετική, δηλαδή ίσως οι κληρονόμοι να επέστρεφαν μόνο τα χρήματα, εάν βέβαια είχαν απομείνει κάποια από αυτά. Εντούτοις, οι *Ασσίζες* δείχνουν με ακρίβεια ότι η γυναίκα δεν μπορούσε να διαθέσει ελεύθερα την περιουσία της, διότι ήταν ο άνδρας που «κέρδιζε την προίκα»[33]. Η προίκα ήταν λοιπόν ένα καθοριστικό στοιχείο των επιγαμιών, καθώς και των στρατηγικών σχεδιασμών των ευγενών. Εάν ο πατέρας πέθαινε πριν συγκεντρώσει την προίκα, τα άλλα ζώντα μέλη της οικογένειας όφειλαν να αναλάβουν αυτή την υποχρέωση. Έτσι, ο δούκας της Αθήνας Gautier VI de Brienne έπρεπε να καταβάλει το 1320 την προίκα της αδερφής του, Isabelle, που θα παντρευόταν τον Gautier d'Enghien[34]. Τον δέκατο τρίτο αιώνα η προίκα συνίστατο από κτήματα, επιτρέποντας στις δύο πλευρές της οικογένειας να δημιουργήσουν πραγματικές στρατηγικές γύρω από την κληρονομιά και να αυξήσουν την περιουσία τους. Στους επόμενους αιώνες τα χαρακτηριστικά της προίκας δεν τροποποιήθηκαν σημαντικά και τα παραδείγματα προικών που διαθέτουμε από τον δέκατο τέταρτο και δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα, δείχνουν ότι αποτελούνταν κυρίως από κτηματική περιουσία. Κατά αυτόν τον τρόπο, όταν η Mahaut de Hainaut παντρεύτηκε τον Guy de La Roche, προικίστηκε με την αρχοντία (*seigneurie*) της Καλαμάτας, μια οικογενειακή ιδιοκτησία[35]. Αν και τα αναφερθέντα παραδείγματα δεν προσφέρουν λεπτομερή εικόνα για την πρακτική της προικοδότησης στον Μορέα, στις περισσότερες περιπτώσεις η προίκα αποτελούνταν από ακίνητη περιουσία και η χρήση της βασιζόταν στο εθιμικό δίκαιο του Μορέως. Η κτηματική περουσία μπορούσε να συμπληρωθεί με χρηματικά ποσά, κάτι που έτεινε να γίνεται συχνότερα στο πέρασμα του χρόνου.

Έτσι, τα περισσότερα κορίτσια, όταν ενηλικιώνονταν ήταν ήδη παντρεμένα. Στο νέο τους ρόλο μερικές κατάφερναν μάλιστα να ξεχωρίσουν. Οι ιστορικές πηγές διαφυλάττουν την μνήμη μερικών γυναικών με αποφασιστικό χαρακτήρα που δεν δίστασαν να πάρουν τις τύχες τους στα χέρια τους.

II. Η έγγαμη γυναίκα

Εάν υπήρχε στο Πριγκηπάτο μια σημαντική ευθύνη που οι γυναίκες μπορούσαν να αναλάβουν ήταν όντως το δικαίωμα της διακυβέρνησης. Πράγματι, ο Σαλικός νόμος, που απέκλειε τις γυναίκες από το δικαίωμα της διαδοχής στη

33. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρο 156.

34. F. DE SASSENAY, *Les Brienne de Lecce et d'Athènes. Histoire d'une des plus grandes familles de la féodalité française (1200-1356)*, Paris 1869, 187.

35. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §839, 332.

γη[36], δεν αναγνωριζόταν στην Πελοπόννησο. Ως εκ τούτου, αρκετές κλήθηκαν να διοικήσουν βαρονίες, όταν η τύχη επεφύλασσε σε αυτές να είναι οι διάδοχες στη βαρονία[37]. Από τις αρχές του δέκατου τρίτου αιώνα, οι πριγκήπισσες έθεταν τη σφραγίδα τους, δίπλα σε εκείνη του συζύγου τους[38], και ο ρόλος τους αντικατοπτρίζεται σε ορισμένα επεισόδια που καταγράφηκαν σε όλες τις παραλλαγές του *Χρονικού του Μορέως*. Η θέση τους ισχυροποιήθηκε μετά την ήττα στην Πελαγονία το 1259[39], όταν οι περισσότεροι ιππότες, καθώς και ο πρίγκηπας, κρατούνταν όμηροι στην Κωνσταντινούπολη[40]. Οι γυναίκες, και ιδίως η πριγκήπισσα Agnès, η οποία ασκούσε την αντιβασιλεία, βρέθηκαν να κυβερνούν μόνες. Ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικό είναι το παράδειγμα του Συμβουλίου στο Νικλί το 1262, το οποίο περιγράφεται από την αραγωνική παραλλαγή του *Χρονικού του Μορέως*: *[...] aquellos que eran escapados de la batalla, contaron las nuevas a la princessa & a les otras nobles duenyas, mulleres de los barones & cavalleros, que eran en su companya en el palacio de la Lacedemonia; & huydas les nuevas huuieron grant dolor. Et tantost la princessa envoi letras a los prelados, barones & cavalleros de la tierra & aquellos que auian escapade de la batalla qui deviessen venir devant d'ella por ordenar como la tierra se devia guarder*[41].

---

36 A. RIGAUDIÈRE, *Pouvoirs et institutions dans la France médiévale*, τόμ. II: *Des temps féodaux aux temps de l'état*, Paris 1994, 22 κ.ε.

37. Σύμφωνα με τον W. MILLER (*The Latins in the Levant: A History of Frankish Greece (1204-1566)*, London 1908, 55) η συμμετοχή των γυναικών στην διακυβέρνηση του Πριγκηπάτου προκάλεσε μόνο ατυχίες.

38. Είναι η περίπτωση της δωρεάς του πρίγκηπα Geoffroy I προς την μονή του Clairvaux Harricourt, η οποία έγινε με την συγκατάθεση της γυναίκας του και του πρωτότοκου γιου του, του μετέπειτα Geoffroy II, βλ. J. LONGNON, *Recherches sur la vie de Geoffroy de Villehardouin, suivies du catalogue des actes des Villehardouin* [Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes-Études 276], Paris 1939, κατάλογος, αρ. 116. Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 3.

39. M. POPOVIĆ, J. PREISER-KAPELLER, *Die Schlacht bei Pelagonia 1259. Der letzte Sieg der Byzantiner und neue Überlegungen zu seiner Lokalisierung, Karfunkel-Combat* 5 (2009) 4-7· D. J. GEANAKOPLOS, Greco-Latin Relations on the Eve of the Byzantine Restoration: The Battle of Pelagonia-1259, *DOP* 7 (1953), 99-141. D. M. NICOL, The Date of the Battle of Pelagonia, *BZ* 49 (1956), 68-71. Επίσης D. J. GEANAKOPLOS, *Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the West, 1258-1282. A Study in Byzantine-Latin Relations*, Cambridge 1959, μετάφρ. στα ελληνικά από Κ. ΠΟΛΙΤΗ, *Ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ Μιχαὴλ Παλαιολόγος καὶ ἡ Δύσις (1258-1282). Μελέτη ἐπὶ τῶν Βυζαντινο-λατινικῶν σχέσεων*, Ἀθῆναι 1969, 49-68.

40. Οι πηγές εσφαλμένα αναφέρουν την Κωνσταντινούπολη, καθώς κρατούνταν στην Λάμψακο: *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §312-316, 114-118. *Libro de los fechos*, §306, 68. Βλ. D. M. NICOL, γαλλ. μεταφρ.: H. DEFRANCE, *Les derniers siècles de Byzance, 1261-1453*, Paris ²2002, 66-67.

41. *Libro de los fechos*, §291, 65.

Στο πιο πάνω χωρίο, η πριγκήπισσα αποφάσισε να συγκαλέσει συμβούλιο με τους φεουδάρχες που είχαν παραμείνει στον Μορέα, για να λάβουν αποφάσεις από κοινού[42]. Η πριγκήπισσα Agnès, ελληνικής καταγωγής, επέδειξε αρκετή πυγμή προκειμένου να την σεβαστούν και στηρίχθηκε σε ένα εδραιωμένο φεουδαλικό σύστημα, σύμφωνα με το οποίο στο Πριγκηπάτο ενώνονταν οι φεουδάρχες γύρω από τον πρίγκηπά τους και -ελλείψει αυτού- γύρω από την πριγκήπισσά τους. Ωστόσο η Agnès περιβαλλόταν από κυρίες της αυλής, το μόνο διαθέσιμο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό του Μορέως τη δεδομένη στιγμή. Μπορούσε επίσης να βασιστεί στους ηλικιωμένους άντρες και υπεύθυνους της διοίκησης που δεν είχαν στρατολογηθεί[43]. Η διαμάχη ήταν έντονη μεταξύ εκείνων που διέβλεπαν τον κίνδυνο της εκχώρησης των φρουρίων στους Βυζαντινούς και των οπαδών της απελευθέρωσης των φυλακισμένων με οποιοδήποτε τίμημα. Σύμφωνα με την αραγωνική παραλλαγή του *Χρονικού του Μορέως*, οι γυναίκες συντάσσονταν με τη δεύτερη ομάδα: *[...] Et huyendo aquesto, la princessa & las mulleres de los barones, qui auian sus maridos en presion, començaron fuertment a cridar, diziendo que querian aver sus maridos, por la qual cosa eran contentas que fuessen rendidos los dichos castiellos al emperador*[44].

---

42. Αντιθέτως στο Βυζάντιο η γυναίκα έπρεπε να μένει μακριά από την δημόσια ζωή και να αφιερωθεί στον τομέα που της ανήκε, δηλαδή τον ιδιωτικό, πρβλ. J. Beaucamp, Incapacité féminine et rôle public à Byzance, στο: *Femmes et pouvoirs des femmes à Byzance et en Occident (VI^e^-XI^e^ siècle), Colloque international (28-30 mars 1996)*, επιμ. S. Lebecq, A. Dierkens, R. Le Jan, J.-M. Sansterre, Lille 1999, 23-36, ιδίως 25 (= J. Beaucamp, *Femmes, patrimoines, normes à Byzance* [Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Bilans de recherche 6], Paris 2010, XVI). Από την Κομνήνεια, ωστόσο, περίοδο ο ρόλος των γυναικών άλλαξε, βλ. A. E. Laiou, The Role of Women in Byzantine Society, *JÖB* 31/1 (1981) (= *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress, Wien, 4.-9. Oktober 1981. Akten, Hauptreferate* I/1), 233-260 ιδίως 250-251 (= Η Ιδια, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, I). Σύμφωνα με την γαλλική παραλλαγή του *Χρονικού του Μορέως* το συμβούλιο έλαβε χώρα στο Νικλί: *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §323, 120.

43. Ο δούκας της Αθήνας προστίθεται σ' αυτούς μετά την επιστροφή του από την Γαλλία, καθώς και ο άρχοντας της Καρύταινας που ελευθερώθηκε για διπλωματικούς σκοπούς, προκειμένου να συζητήσει το θέμα της παραχώρησης των κάστρων ως λύτρα για την απελευθέρωση του πρίγκιπα: *The Chronicle of Morea*, στίχ. 4403-4406. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §323-324, 120. Η πριγκήπισσα καθώς και η πλειοψηφία της Βουλής εξέλεξαν τον δούκα της Αθήνας ως "bail et gouverneur de toute la principauté": *Libro de los fechos*, §294, 299.

44. *Libro de los fechos*, §301, 67.

Στη σκηνή που περιγράφεται με πολλή φαντασία οι κυρίες ουρλιάζουν, για να κάνουν την γνώμη τους να ακουστεί στη συνέλευση. Η συγκεκριμένη περιγραφή δημιουργεί μια αρνητική εντύπωση, γιατί ο χρονογράφος εμμένει στην αντίθεση γυναίκες–άντρες. Ενώ περιγράφει τις παρεμβάσεις των ανδρών ως βασικές και κατανοητές[45], οι αντίστοιχες γυναικείες φαίνονται περισσότερο συγκεχυμένες[46]. Το εν λόγω κείμενο καταδεικνύει ότι η περίεργη συμπεριφορά τους οφειλόταν ουσιαστικά στην απειρία τους σ' αυτόν τον τομέα: από τη συγκίνησή τους υπερβάλλουν εύκολα, χάνουν την ψυχραιμία τους, ενώ αντιθέτως οι άντρες παραμένουν ψύχραιμοι και ήρεμοι. Μπορούμε επίσης να συναγάγουμε ένα περαιτέρω συμπέρασμα, ότι ενώ ο δούκας της Αθήνας Guy I de la Roche[47] υπερασπιζόταν φανατικά τον φραγκικό Μορέα, η Agnès δεν έτρεφε τα ίδια αισθήματα για την εγκατάσταση των Βυζαντινών στην χερσόνησο[48]. Μετά από αυτό το συμβάν, η Agnès διατήρησε μια κάποια εξουσία και κατά αυτόν τον τρόπο επικύρωσε επισήμως το 1267 τις συνθήκες του Βιτέρμπο μεταξύ του συζύγου της και του Καρόλου Ανδεγαυού, αναγνωρίζοντας στον βασιλέα της Σικελίας την επικυριαρχία του Μορέως[49].

Οι πηγές αναδεικνύουν μια άλλη ισχυρή γυναίκα του δέκατου τέταρτου αιώνα, την Francesca Acciaiuoli, δούκισσα των Ιονίων νήσων και σύζυγο του Καρόλου Τόκκο, την οποία το *Χρονικό των Τόκκων* δεν παύει να εγκωμιάζει. Η Francesca Acciaiuoli επέδειξε μεγάλη σύνεση και ικανότητες διακυβέρνησης, μη διστάζοντας να τεθεί επικεφαλής των στρατευμάτων σε περιπτώσεις επιθέσεων[50]. Η μητέρα της, Agnes de Saraceni, ήταν επίσης μια γυναίκα με επιρροή που επενέβη στη διπλωματική δραστηριότητα του συζύγου της Nerio Acciaiuoli το 1389[51]. Η Francesca αξιολογείται ως μια γυναίκα με βούληση,

45. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §325-327, 120-122.

46. Αυτή η παράγραφος θυμίζει τον Αριστοφάνη και την αντίληψη που έχει για το γυναικείο φύλο, όπως αυτή αποτυπώνεται στο έργο του *Ἐκκλησιάζουσαι*, έκδ. και γαλλ. μετάφρ. V. Coulon, *Aristophane*, V: *L'Assemblée des femmes*, Paris 1997.

47. *The Chronicle of Morea*, στίχ. 4403-4406· *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §323-324, 120· *Libro de los fechos*, §294, 299.

48. Πρόκειται για την Άννα, κόρη του δεσπότη της Ηπείρου, βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 3.

49. J. Longnon, Le rattachement de la principauté de Morée au royaume de Sicile en 1267, *Journal des Savants* 47, Paris 1942, 139.

50. *Cronaca dei Tocco*, στίχ. 1846-1857, 356-357.

51. J.-A. C. Buchon, *Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la principauté française de Morée et ses hautes baronnies, fondées à la suite de la Quatrième croisade*, τόμ. I: *Investigation des archives et bibliothèques de Toscane, Naples, Sicile, Malte, Corfou*, Paris 1843, 144.

αλλά ο χρονογράφος επισημαίνει ότι δεν έφερε στον κόσμο έναν νόμιμο κληρονόμο του Κάρολου Τόκκο, αν και αυτός είχε πολλά εξώγαμα παιδιά[52]. Το συγκεκριμένο γεγονός θα μπορούσε να γίνει αιτία αποπομπής της, κάτι όμως που δε συνέβη, γιατί οι δύο σύζυγοι αντιμετώπισαν μαζί τις δυσκολίες και βρήκαν επωφελείς λύσεις για την ευρύτερη οικογένεια (το γένος)[53]. Όταν το 1394 πέθανε ο πατέρας της, η Francesca ονομάστηκε εκτελέστρια της διαθήκης. Με αυτόν τον τίτλο κρατούσε τα κλειδιά του ταμείου του και υπερασπίστηκε την πολιορκούμενη Κόρινθο[54]. Σε μια πρώτη φάση, ευρισκόμενη ενώπιον του εχθρού και μπροστά στην ταχεία εξέλιξη των στρατιωτικών επιχειρήσεων η Francesca ανέλαβε την ευθύνη της άμυνας της πόλης[55]: οι στρατιώτες της ορκίστηκαν πίστη και υποταγή και την αναγνώρισαν ως κυρία «λιζία» (*lige*). Όταν αργότερα την συνάντησε ο σύζυγός της Κάρολος Τόκκο, τέθηκε εκείνος επικεφαλής των στρατιωτικών επιχειρήσεων. Η Francesca Acciaiuoli έχοντας αναλάβει για μερικές ημέρες την ηγεσία των στρατευμάτων είχε την υποχρέωση να υπερασπιστεί την πόλη. Διηύθυνε τις επιχειρήσεις και τις διαπραγματεύσεις έχοντας την βοήθεια του στενού περιβάλλοντός της, αλλά αυτό μαρτυρεί σε κάθε περίπτωση μια αδιαμφισβήτητη δύναμη χαρακτήρα.

Μια άλλη πηγή, το *Χρονικό του Froissart*, κατά την εξιστόρηση της επιστροφής του Jean Sans Peur από την μάχη της Νικόπολης το 1397[56], τονίζει το

52. *Cronaca dei Tocco*, στίχ. 1935-1936, 364-365.

53. Τον 13ο αιώνα δεν ήταν ασυνήθιστο να αποπέμπονται οι γυναίκες, εάν θεωρούντο στείρες. Βλ. G. Duby, M. Perrot, *Histoire des femmes en Occident*, τόμ. II: *Le Moyen Age*, Paris 1990, 368. Το ίδιο, όμως, δε συνέβη στην περίπτωση της Francesca Acciaiuoli η οποία ανήκε σε ένα πολύ ισχυρό γένος. Βλ. I. Ortega, *Les lignages nobiliaires dans la Morée latine (XIII^e-XV^e siècle). Permanences et mutations*, Turnhout 2012, 108.

54. Δεν πρόκειται για την πρωτότοκη κόρη του Nerio, Bartolomea, που ήταν παντρεμένη με τον δεσπότη του Μοριά, Θεόδωρο, ο οποίος εκμεταλλεύτηκε το θάνατο του πεθερού του για να καταλάβει την περιοχή γύρω από την Κόρινθο. Στην επιχείρηση αυτή συμμάχησε με τον γαμπρό του, Antonio, που επίσης δεν ήταν ικανοποιημένος με την απόφαση του πατέρα του. Βλ. Ortega, *Les lignages* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 53), 156-157.

55. Σε άλλες μεμονωμένες περιπτώσεις οι γυναίκες μπορούσαν να τεθούν επικεφαλής στρατιωτικών επιχειρήσεων και να επιδείξουν εξαιρετική συμπεριφορά. Ο Ramon Muntaner επιβεβαιώνει ότι ο υπεύθυνος της άμυνας της Καλλίπολης έναντι των βυζαντινών επιθέσεων, δεν δίστασε να εξοπλίσει τις γυναίκες της Καταλανικής Κομπανίας για να διατηρήσει την τοπική κυριαρχία. Τις συγχαίρει μάλιστα για την ανδρεία τους: *Ramon Muntaner, Les Almogavres* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 105· *Chroniques étrangères* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 448-454· *Crónica catalana* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 427.

56. Philippe de Mézières, *Une epistre lamentable et consolatoire addressée en 1397 à Philippe le Hardi, duc de Bourgogne, sur la défaite de Nicopolis (1396)*, εκδ. Ph. Contamine,

ρόλο που έπαιξε η Francesca: *Et de Coufot... vindrent cheoir en l'isle de Chifolignie, et là ancrèrent et yssirent hors des gallées, et trouvèrent grant foison de dames et de damoiselles qui demeurent ou dit ysle et en ont la seignourie, lesquelles receuprent les seigneurs de France à grant joye, et les menèrent esbatre tout parmy l'isle qui est moult belle et plaisante [...]. Moult grandement se contemplèrent le conte de Nevers et les seigneurs de France des dames de Chifolignie, car joieusement elles les recueillièrent et leur dirent que leur venue leur avoit fait grant bien pour la cause que ils estoient tous hommes venus de hault lieu ; car on n'a pas accoustumé, se ce ne sont marchans, de là aler, ne converse entre elles*[57].

Οι δυτικοί ιππότες που κρατούνταν για πολλούς μήνες αιχμάλωτοι από τον Βαγιαζήτ, παρέμειναν στην Μυτιλήνη, πριν επιβιβαστούν σε πλοίο για να επισκεφθούν την Μεθώνη, την Γλαρέντζα και έπειτα την Κεφαλονιά[58]. Στην Κεφαλονιά που, όπως φαίνεται, η διακυβέρνηση είχε περάσει στα χέρια των γυναικών, οι Γάλλοι ευγενείς έγιναν δεκτοί με ιδιαίτερη χαρά, καθώς αυτοί που συνήθως κατέφθαναν στο νησί ήταν Ιταλοί έμποροι. Το *Χρονικό του Froissart* δεν μνημονεύει πουθενά τον Κάρολο Τόκκο, ο οποίος μάλλον απουσίαζε κατά την παραμονή του Jean Sans Peur. Είναι αλήθεια ότι οι στρατιωτικές επιχειρήσεις εναντίον των άλλων λατινικών οικογενειών ή των Αλβανών ήταν πολλές, και η κόμισσα Francesca Acciaiuoli έπρεπε να ασκήσει την αντιβασιλεία στις περιόδους που απουσίαζε ο σύζυγός της[59]. Ορισμένες λοιπόν έγγαμες γυναίκες επέδειξαν ισχυρό πολιτικό κριτήριο. Χάριν μάλιστα των προσόντων τους κατάφεραν να κερδίσουν την αναγνώριση των οικείων τους, καθώς τις έβλεπαν να διακρίνονται σε ορισμένα καθήκοντα. Αν και επί του συνόλου των ευγενών οι γυναίκες αυτές δεν αποτελούν την πλειονότητα, οι πηγές διηγούνται ευχαρίστως τις περιπέτειές τους.

Παντρεμένες και δη ξαναπαντρεμένες, οι νεαρές γυναίκες δεν είχαν πολλά περιθώρια να αλλάξουν τη συνήθεια και να επιλέξουν οι ίδιες τον μέλλοντα σύζυγό τους. Ωστόσο, υπάρχουν και παραδείγματα για το αντίθετο, όπου η γυναίκα παρά τις πιέσεις της οικογένειάς της, επέλεξε να ακολουθήσει την

J. PAVIOT, Paris 2008· *Nicopolis 1396-1996. Actes du colloque international organisé par l'Académie des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Dijon et le Centre national de la recherché scientifique réuni à Dijon, au Conseil régional de Bourgogne, le 18 octobre 1996*, επιμ. J. PAVIOT, M. CHAUNEZ-BOUILLOT, Dijon 1997 = *Annales de Bourgogne* 68/3 (1996).

57. Jean Froissart, *Chroniques* (εκδ. M. LE BARON KEVRYN DE LETTENHOVE, *Les Chroniques de Jean Froissart*, τόμ. XVI, Bruxelles 1872, ανατ. Osnabrück 1967), 53-54.

58. B. SCHNERB, *Jean Sans Peur*, Paris 2005, 95-97.

59. *Cronaca dei Tocco*, στίχ. 1846-1857, 356-357.

καρδιά της. Οι γάμοι που βασίζονταν στο συναίσθημα υποδηλώνονται έμμεσα μέσω μιας υπόδειξης ή κάποιας φράσης. Σίγουρα ήταν λιγοστοί. Εντούτοις η ύπαρξή τους μαρτυρεί τη στάση που τήρησαν ορισμένες γυναίκες-ευγενείς, όπως η πριγκήπισσα Isabelle de Villehardouin που προχώρησε σε τρίτο γάμο χωρίς βασιλική άδεια και με αυτόν τον τρόπο βρέθηκε αντιμέτωπη με τον κίνδυνο να εκπέσει του κλήρου της (déshérence). Τελικά τούτο δεν συνέβη, γιατί ο Κάρολος Β΄ αναγνώρισε τον νέο σύζυγο, τον Φίλιππο της Σαβοΐας, ως νέο πρίγκηπα[60]. Είναι δύσκολο να πει κανείς σε ποιο βαθμό η έλξη ή η αποφασιστικότητα της Isabelle de Villehardouin έπαιξαν ρόλο στην επιλογή του υποψηφίου. Όσον αφορά στον μνηστήρα, αυτός ήταν κυρίως γοητευμένος από τον τίτλο που θα του έφερνε η εν λόγω ένωση, αφού η πριγκήπισσα είχε ήδη δύο προηγούμενους γάμους[61].

Η συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση είναι ίδια με εκείνη της κόρης της, της Mahaut de Hainaut, που συνήψε γάμο από αγάπη, ενώ κάτι τέτοιο της απαγορευόταν από την βασιλεία των Ανδεγαυών: *[...] por que lo avia promesso a un cavallero secretament, por que lo amaua, qui se clamaua micer Hugo de la Paliça. De la qual cosa desplazio mucho a sus cavalleros & barones, & por que auia recussado el matrimonio del hermano del rey, & muchas de·sus gentes s'en passaron en su terra en Burgunya*[62]. Πολύ νέα, η Mahaut de Hainaut παντρεύτηκε τον Guy de la Roche, ένωση που εγκρίθηκε από το σύνολο των ευγενών του Μορέως. Κατόπιν, το 1313 παντρεύτηκε τον Louis de Bourgogne, που έφτασε στην Πελοπόννησο από τη γαλλική επαρχία με πολλούς συντρόφους του[63]. Όταν αυτός πέθανε, τρία μόλις χρόνια αργότερα, η Mahaut πιέστηκε από τον Robert d'Anjou να παντρευτεί τον μικρότερο αδελφό του Jean Gravina (το 1318). Εκείνη αρνήθηκε υποστηρίζοντας ότι ήταν ήδη παντρεμένη με τον ιππότη Hugues de la Palisse, κάτι που σύμφωνα με το παραπάνω χωρίο, απογοήτευσε ένα μέρος των δυτικών ευγενών που είχαν έρθει για να «γευτούν την περιπέτεια του Μορέως». Ο Robert d'Anjou βρήκε τότε την ευκαιρία να συλλάβει την πριγκήπισσα, η οποία τελικά πέθανε στις φυλακές της Νάπολης μερικά χρόνια αργότερα[64].

---

60. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §845-847, 334-335· A. Bon, *La Morée franque. Recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la Principauté de Achaïe (1205-1430)*, Paris 1969, 173.

61. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §847, 333· *Libro de los fechos*, §504-506, 111.

62. *Libro de los fechos*, §626, 137.

63. Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 3.

64. *Libro de los fechos*, §631-635, 138-139.

Οι πηγές καταγράφουν μερικές ακόμη περιπτώσεις όπου υπερίσχυσαν οι προσωπικές επιλογές, είναι όμως γενικά λίγες, αφού τα κορίτσια -οι μετέπειτα γυναίκες- γίνονταν παιχνίδι της εξουσίας. Το γένος τους τις χρησιμοποιούσε από πολύ νωρίς και τις ξαναχρησιμοποιούσε μόλις ήταν δυνατό για σκοπούς στρατηγικής. Τις αρραβώνιαζαν από μικρή ηλικία, τις πάντρευαν λίγο μετά την εφηβεία και τις ξαναπάντρευαν μόλις χήρευαν. Για τις περισσότερες από αυτές, οι συγκεκριμένοι γάμοι ήταν επιβεβλημένοι, έτσι ώστε να συμμαχήσουν με μια ισχυρή δυναστεία ή για να υπερασπιστούν την γη τους, που μόνες τους δεν μπορούσαν να την προστατέψουν. Εν τούτοις, στο άκαμπτο αυτό πλαίσιο οι πηγές αναδεικνύουν τις εξαιρέσεις που επιβεβαιώνουν τον κανόνα, μέσα από μερικές γυναικείες φυσιογνωμίες που έκαναν τις προσωπικές τους επιλογές ενάντια στη θέληση όλων των άλλων. Σε κάθε περίπτωση, οι γυναίκες, καθώς θεωρούνταν απλά κρίκοι στη γενεαλογική αλυσίδα, ήταν σίγουρα περισσότερο ευάλωτες από τους άντρες.

III. Η χήρα

Ένας τρόπος για να υπολογίσουμε την αυτονομία των γυναικών είναι να εξετάσουμε την δυνατότητα που είχαν να διαθέσουν την περιουσία τους, και να εκτιμήσουμε τα δικαιώματά τους επί της περιουσίας των συζύγων τους. Εάν το θέμα του γάμου είναι ενδιαφέρον, το ίδιο ισχύει και για την περίπτωση ενός νέου γάμου: οι γυναίκες ευγενείς δεν μένουν για πολύ καιρό χήρες. Τα παραδείγματα είναι πολλά, κυρίως από την πριγκηπική οικογένεια των Βιλλεαρδουίνων. Μια τέτοια είναι η περίπτωση της Agnès που παντρεύτηκε το 1258 τον Guillaume de Villehardouin και είκοσι χρόνια αργότερα ξαναπαντρεύτηκε με τον Nicolas II de Saint-Omer[65]. Η πρακτική του δεύτερου γάμου ήταν βαθιά ριζωμένη, διότι οι κόρες του Guillaume και της Agnès ξαναπαντρεύτηκαν επίσης πολλές φορές. Η εν λόγω συνήθεια προέκυπτε, όπως προαναφέρθηκε, από την εμφανή αδυναμία των γυναικών να κυβερνήσουν ή να διαχειριστούν μια ιδιοκτησία. Μπροστά τους υπήρχαν πολλά εμπόδια αλλά εάν τα ξεπερνούσαν, έπρεπε να εκπληρώσουν τα ίδια καθήκοντα με τους άντρες[66]. Όπως στην οικογένεια του εκάστοτε πρίγκηπα, έτσι και στους κύκλους των ευγενών τα παραδείγματα ενός νέου γάμου είναι αρκετά συχνά, όπως μαρτυρούν οι γενεαλογίες. Η περίπτωση της Isabelle de la Roche είναι αρκετά ενδεικτική: δύο μόλις χρόνια μετά τον

65. ORTEGA, *Les lignages* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 54), 571.

66. Θα μπορούσαν επί παραδείγματι να εξαγοράσουν την στρατιωτική θητεία (*adoha, adohamentum*): *Les Assises*, άρθρα 31 και 35.

θάνατο του πρώτου συζύγου της Geoffroy της Καρύταινας το 1275, παντρεύτηκε τον Hugues de Brienne πιεζόμενη από τα συμφέροντα της οικογένειας, τα οποία έγιναν και δικά της[67].

Τα παραδείγματα διαδοχικών γάμων δεν είναι μεμονωμένα· φθάνουν μάλιστα μέχρι και σε ακραίες περιπτώσεις, όπως εκείνη που αναφέρει ο Βενετός χρονογράφος Marino Sanudo: μνημονεύει την περίπτωση μιας κυρίας της οποίας οι επτά σύζυγοι χάθηκαν στον πόλεμο[68], αντικατοπτρίζοντας έτσι την ένταση των πολέμων που διεξάγονταν στο Πριγκηπάτο προκαλώντας θανάτους και αφήνοντας πίσω τους πολλές χήρες. Οι διαδοχικοί γάμοι στο Πριγκηπάτο απεικονίζουν επίσης τη συνεχή έλλειψη γυναικών. Από την άλλη πλευρά ο αριθμός των ελεύθερων ανδρών ήταν υψηλός. Για να δημιουργήσουν γρήγορα μια οικογένεια, ζητούσαν σε γάμο μια χήρα, η οποία, όπως φαίνεται, δεν αντιστεκόταν, διότι ένας νέος γάμος της προσέφερε πολλά πλεονεκτήματα[69]. Ο δεύτερος γάμος, που ήταν αρκετά συνηθισμένος, ήταν εφικτός υπό την προϋπόθεση ενός προγενέστερου πρώϊμου γάμου. Για παράδειγμα, η Isabelle de Villehardouin, παντρεύτηκε δώδεκα χρονών και χήρεψε στα δεκαοκτώ. Ξαναπαντρεύτηκε στα είκοσι εννέα και ξαναχήρεψε στα τριάντα οκτώ. Τελικά, έκανε έναν τρίτο γάμο στα σαράντα δύο και πέθανε πενήντα δύο ετών. Μολονότι το προσδόκιμο ζωής ήταν χαμηλό τον δέκατο τέταρτο αιώνα, οι διαδοχικοί γάμοι της πριγκήπισσας δεν προκαλούν έκπληξη[70].

Εν τούτοις, ο θάνατος του συζύγου διατάραζε αναπόφευκτα τις σχέσεις μεταξύ των δύο οικογενειών. Η χήρα είχε διάφορες επιλογές: είτε να μείνει με τους συγγενείς του συζύγου, ή να επιστρέψει στον έλεγχο της δικής της οικογένειας. Σε μερικές περιπτώσεις στον Μορέα, οι χήρες προτιμούσαν την πρώτη επιλογή. Η Maddalena Buondelmonti, χήρα του Leonardo Tocco, άσκησε την αντιβασιλεία στο όνομα των τέκνων της μετά τον θάνατο του

67. Ortega, *Les lignages* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 54), 601.

68. Marino Sanudo Torsello, *Istoria di Romania* (έκδ. Ε. Η. Παπαδοπουλου, *Μαρίνος Σανούδος Τορσέλλο Ιστορία της Ρωμανίας. Εισαγωγή, έκδοση, μετάφραση, σχόλια* [Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών. Πηγές 4], Αθήνα 2000), 128-129. Παλαιότερη έκδοση: *Marino Sanudo Torsello, Istoria del regno di Romania*, εκδ. Ch. Hopf, *Chroniques gréco-romanes inédites ou connues*, Berlin 1873.

69. Όσον αφορά στους νέους γάμους των ανδρών, ανταποκρίνονται στα ίδια κριτήρια με αυτά του γάμου: γίνονται για έναν επωφελή σκοπό, μπορούν επίσης να έχουν στόχο να διαιωνίσουν το γένος, όταν δεν υπάρχουν παιδιά από τον πρώτο γάμο, Ortega, *Les lignages* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 54), 206-224.

70. Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 3.

συζύγου της το 1375/76[71]. Αρνήθηκε να ξαναπαντρευτεί παρά τις προτάσεις που τής έκαναν, αλλά δέχτηκε κοντά της την παρουσία του αδελφού της Esaü. Η Maddalena έπρεπε να υπερασπιστεί την βαρονία της από τις αλβανικές επιθέσεις και έδωσε την κομητεία της Κεφαλληνίας καθ' ολοκληρία στον γιο της Κάρολο την δεκαετία του 1390[72]. Ο τελευταίος παντρεύτηκε το 1393 την Francesca Acciaiuoli, η οποία, όπως και η πεθερά της Maddalena, συμμετείχε εξίσου με τον σύζυγό της στις υποθέσεις του κράτους. Έτσι, η Francesca Acciaiuoli αποτελεί παράδειγμα πίστης και αφοσίωσης στον σύζυγό της, όπως επίσης και πρότυπο ψυχραιμίας την οποία επέδειξε κατά τη διαδοχή του πατέρα της το 1394. Εντός του κύκλου των ευγενών του Μορέως υπήρχαν συνεπώς αποφασιστικές και δυναμικές γυναίκες, που διέθεταν πολιτικό κριτήριο και υπερασπίζονταν τα συμφέροντα του γένους δίπλα στους συζύγους τους, ή και μόνες τους. Όμως, οι συγκεκριμένες περιπτώσεις δεν αποτελούσαν τον γενικό κανόνα, γιατί η ευγενής γυναίκα, με ορισμένες μόνο εξαιρέσεις που επισημαίνονται στις πηγές, βρισκόταν συχνά σε θέση αδυναμίας.

Οι χήρες ήταν συχνά γυναίκες που παντρεύονταν πάλι και ήταν σχετικά νέες, αν λάβουμε υπόψη την ηλικία του πρώτου γάμου τους. Έτσι, την επομένη της μάχης του Κηφισού (1311)[73], οι χήρες των ιπποτών του Πριγκηπάτου παντρεύτηκαν Καταλανούς τυχοδιώκτες. Σχετικά με τους δεσμούς υπογαμίας με τις ευγενείς του Μορέως ο Ramon Muntaner αναφέρει ότι «Ils donnaient à chacunune dame si noble, que celui à qui elle échoyait ne pouvait dédaigner de lui présenter l'aiguière»[74]. Μπορούμε να συμπεράνουμε ότι οι εν λόγω κυρίες δεν είχαν καμιά ελευθερία, είτε επρόκειτο για την κόμισσα Σαλώνων, ή τη μαρκησία της Βοδόνιτσας, ή τη σύζυγο οποιουδήποτε ευγενούς, καθώς η υπεράσπιση των

71. *Cronaca dei Tocco*, στίχ. 13-15, 220-221.

72. J. Chrysostomides, Italian Women in Greece in the Late Fourteenth and Early Fifteenth Centuries, *RSBS* 2 (1982), 119-132, κυρίως 124-125 (Η Ιδια, *Byzantium and Venice, 1204-1453*, επιμ. M. Heslop, Ch. Dendrinos [Variorum Reprints], Farnham 2011, VI). Βλ. Παράρτημα, Γενεαλογία, αρ. 1.

73. K. M. Setton, The Catalans in Greece (1311–1380), στο: *A History of the Crusades*, εκδ. K. M. Setton, τόμ. 1-6, Madison, Wisc. 1969-1989, εδώ: τόμ. 3, 167-224 (= Ο Ιδιος, *Athens in the Middle Ages* [Variorum Reprints], London 1975, IV).

74. *Crónica catalana* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 457: *E axi partiren se la ciutat Estines e totes les dones per mullers a aquells a companya e a cada hu, segons que era hom, e donaven a tal tant honrrada dona, no li languera que li donas aygua mans*· *Chroniques étrangères* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 477· *Ramon Muntaner, Les Almogavres* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 12), 150.

γαιών τούς επέβαλε να ξαναπαντρευτούν[75]. Η μάχη του Κηφισού καθόρισε το μέλλον του Δουκάτου των Αθηνών, στο οποίο οι Καταλανοί αντικατέστησαν ως επί το πλείστον τους Γάλλους ευγενείς χωρίς να τροποποιήσουν ωστόσο τα κοινωνικά πλαίσια[76]. Η φανερή βιασύνη ορισμένων χηρών να ξαναπαντρευτούν δείχνει τις δυσκολίες που συναντούσαν στη διαχείριση των περιουσιών τους. Στις αριστοκράτισσες του Πριγκηπάτου επιβαλλόταν ο γάμος προκειμένου να υπερασπιστούν την γη τους, μη μπορώντας να πράξουν διαφορετικά.

Οι γυναίκες του Πριγκηπάτου, όπως και αυτές της Δύσης, είχαν το δικαίωμα της επικληρίας (*douaire*, *ντουάρι*). Οι *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας* μας πληροφορούν επανειλημμένως για το δικαίωμα της επικαρπίας, το οποίο η χήρα μπορούσε εν μέρει να διεκδικήσει: επρόκειτο γενικά για το ήμισυ της περιουσίας του άνδρα της, ενώ μετά τον θάνατό της αυτό επέστρεφε στην οικογένεια του συζύγου[77]. Οι *Ασσίζες* αναφέρουν τη γενίκευση αυτής της πρακτικής και δείχνουν ενδιαφέρον για τους όρους της χηρείας[78]. Η χήρα ενός προδότη προστατευόταν από τις συνέπειες της συμπεριφοράς του συζύγου της: *sauf si elle a été victime de la trahison*[79] και κατ'αυτόν τον τρόπο μπορούσε να κρατήσει την επικληρία[80], αν και δεν μπορούσε να την χαρεί ελεύθερα[81]. Ποσοτικά, η επικληρία διέφερε ανάλογα με την περιουσία του συζύγου τη στιγμή του γάμου[82]. Ωστόσο για να λάβει το μερίδιό της επιβάλλονταν στη χήρα μερικές υποχρεώσεις, όπως, για παράδειγμα, να αιτιολογήσει την ιδιοκτησία της γης όταν παντρεύτηκε[83], να καταβάλλει το «relief» (συμβολική εισφορά για το φέουδο), όπως επίσης και να προσφέρει στρατιωτικές υπηρεσίες στον κύριό της. Αυτή η τελευταία υποχρέωση γινόταν ισχυρό στοιχείο περιορισμού για τις χήρες, καθώς αυτές μη μπορώντας να την εκτελέσουν, υποχρεώνονταν να ξαναπαντρευτούν.

Η διαδοχή του Geoffroy de Briel αποτελεί ένα χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα. Το φέουδο του συγκεκριμένου ιππότη που ανήκε στις νέες βαρονίες («nouveau

---

75. Ο Thomas III d'Autremencourt, ο Alberto Pallavicini καθώς και πολλοί άλλοι ιππότες σκοτώθηκαν πολεμώντας τους Καταλανούς. Βλ. W. HABERSTUMPF, *Dinasti Latini in Grecia e nell'Egeo (secoli XII-XVII)*, Turin 2003, 68.

76. ORTEGA, *Les lignages* (βλ. ό. π., σημ. 54), 52-65.

77. *Les Assises*, άρθρο 121.

78. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρα 97, 98, 105, 112, 134.

79. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρο 97.

80. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρα 112 και 141.

81. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρο 76.

82. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρα 35, 45, 98 και 134.

83. *Αυτόθι*, άρθρο 35, 45, 98 και 134.

don») και όχι σε εκείνες της κατάκτησης, μοιράστηκε στα δύο μετά το θάνατό του, γιατί ο κάτοχός του δεν είχε άμεσους κληρονόμους[84]. Η ελληνική παραλλαγή του *Χρονικού του Μορέως* είναι σαφής: *τὸ ἄλλο ἡ γυναῖκα του διὰ ντουάριν ὅπου εἶχεν*[85]. Πρόκειται για εφαρμογή των *Ασσιζών της Ρωμανίας*. Πράγματι η Isabelle de la Roche, χήρα του Geoffroy de Briel, έλαβε το ήμισυ του φέουδου της Καρύταινας, χωρίς να υπάρξουν παρεμβάσεις λόγω της δράσης του συζύγου της[86]. Διαθέτουμε λίγες πληροφορίες για την ακριβή σύνθεση της επικληρίας της πριγκήπισσας Agnès, μετά το θάνατο του Guillaume de Villehardouin το 1278. Το *Χρονικό του Μορέως* αναφέρει απλώς ότι είχε *certeines terres en la Morée et en la chastellanie de Calamate*[87], αλλά δέχτηκε κατ' ουσίαν τις καστελλανίες (τα κάστρα) της Καλαμάτας και του Clermont[88]. Τα παραδείγματα που καταγράφονται από την αφηγηματική πηγή επιβεβαιώνουν λοιπόν την χρήση και το σεβασμό της επικληρίας. Αν και αναγνωρισμένη, η χρήση της επιτρέπεται με δυσκολία από τα φεουδαλικά έθιμα, καθώς αντιπροσωπεύει τον έλεγχο της γης από γυναίκες, για τις οποίες οι φεουδαλικές υποχρεώσεις είναι ξένες[89]. Παρόλα αυτά, η αποδοχή της επικληρίας επέτρεπε στις γυναίκες να διατηρήσουν την κληρονομιά τους κατά τον δέκατο τρίτο, δέκατο τέταρτο και δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα. Σύμφωνα με το έθιμο του Μορέως, η μισή περιουσία του Léonard de Véroli επανήλθε στη δεύτερη σύζυγό του Alix το 1282. Ο Ανδεγαυός βασιλιάς συναίνεσε και οι γαίες που εκχωρήθηκαν από το δημόσιο ταμείο (*fisc*) βρίσκονταν στην Μεσσηνία[90]. Τελικά, η Θεοδώρα Ασανίνα που παντρεύτηκε τον Bartolomeo III Ghisi, κυρίαρχο του ενός τρίτου του Νεγροπόντε, έλαβε την μισή περιουσία μετά τον θάνατό του στα τέλη του δέκατου τέταρτου αιώνα, και έτσι έγινε επίκληρος χήρα (*douairière*) του ενός τρίτου του Νεγροπόντε[91].

---

84. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §497, 194-195: *Et fu donnée la moitié a sa femme, la suer du duc d'Atthenes et l'autre moitié parvint au prince Guillerme.*

85. *The Chronicle of Morea*, στίχ. 7239, 470-471.

86. P. W. Topping, *Feudal Institutions as Revealed in the Assizes of Romania, the Law Code of Frankish Greece: Translation of the Text of the Assizes with a Commentary on Feudal Institutions in Greece and in Medieval Europe*, Philadelphia 1949, 151.

87. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §553, 220.

88. J. Longnon, *L'Empire latin de Constantinople et la principauté de Morée*, Paris 1949, 249.

89. Topping, *Feudal Institutions*, 151-152.

90. *The Chronicle of Morea*, στίχ. 7739, 502-503.

91. Loenertz, *Les Ghisi* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 27), 179.

Λόγω της πολυεθνικής σύνθεσης του Πριγκηπάτου του Μορέως[92], και παρ' ό,τι υπάρχει το σύνολο των *Ασσιζών της Ρωμανίας*, η διάσταση των εθίμων έτεινε να δημιουργήσει ανταγωνισμό μεταξύ των διαφορετικών νομικών παραδόσεων. Αυτό γίνεται αντιληπτό στην διαθήκη του Nicolo Acciaiuoli που συντάχθηκε το 1359. Όλοι οι συγγενείς αναφέρονται στη διαθήκη, όμως η σύζυγος του Margherita δεν ευνοούνταν ιδιαίτερα: εκτός από τις 100 ουγγιές που της χορηγήθηκαν για τη σωτηρία της ψυχής του, επανέκτησε την προίκα της, αλλά δεν έγινε τιτλούχος εφ' όρου ζωής του φέουδου του Maiori[93]. Από το μικρό ύψος αυτής της κληρονομιάς προκύπτει το συμπέρασμα ότι το ανδρόγυνο δεν συμφωνούσε μεταξύ του και ότι ο Nicolo Acciaiuoli δεν υπαγόταν στα έθιμα του Μορέως παρά μόνο για τα φέουδα του που βρίσκονταν εντός του Πριγκηπάτου.

Τελευταίο σημαντικό παράδειγμα είναι εκείνο της Marguerite de Passavant που ανήκε σε ένα μεγάλο γένος της Πελοποννήσου. Ενώ ήταν χήρα, εστάλη στην Κωνσταντινούπολη ως εγγύηση για την απελευθέρωση του πρίγκηπα Geoffroy de Villehardouin μετά την ήττα στην Πελαγονία (1259). Παρέμεινε στην βυζαντινή πρωτεύουσα από το 1262 έως το 1275. Μετά την επιστροφή της διεκδίκησε την κληρονομιά του αποβιώσαντος θείου της Gautier de Rosières, του οποίου η κατακτηθείσα βαρονία δεν μεταβιβαζόταν παρά μόνο στους άμεσους κληρονόμους. Εκείνη λοιπόν ήταν η πιο κοντινή κληρονόμος[94].

Όμως οι γυναίκες υπέκειντο στους ίδιους περιορισμούς όπως και οι άντρες: εάν η διεκδίκηση της κληρονομιάς γινόταν με καθυστέρηση αυτό οδηγούσε σε κατάσχεσή της από τον Πρίγκηπα. Αυτό ακριβώς συνέβη στην περίπτωση της Marguerite de Passavant γιατί *le terme ordiné de l'an et du jour* είχε παρέλθει[95]. Το σχετικό άρθρο από τις *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας* αναφέρει αυτόν τον τύπο κληρονομιάς δίνοντας το παράδειγμα της Marguerite. Η περίπτωση της λοιπόν έγινε σημείο αναφοράς, που ήταν γνωστό και μάλιστα μνημονευόταν δεκαετίες αργότερα. Παρόλα αυτά οι ευγενείς ήταν διχασμένοι, γιατί η εν λόγω

92. ORTEGA, *Les lignages*, 27-65.

93. É.-G. LÉONARD, *Histoire de Jeanne Ire, reine de Naples, comtesse de Provence (1343-1382)*, τόμ. III: *Le Règne de Louis de Tarente*, Monaco-Paris 1936, 374.

94. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §501, 197.

95. *Αυτόθι*, §503-504, 198-199. Είναι σημαντικό να υπογραμμιστεί ότι οι *Ασσίζες της Ρωμανίας* αναφέρουν ότι ο κληρονόμος του φέουδου είχε μια προθεσμία *deux ans et deux jours de délai* για να τιμήσει τον Πρίγκηπα (*Les Assises*, άρθρο 36). Μόνο αν αυτός απουσίαζε από το Πριγκηπάτο μπορούσαν να του δοθούν οι γαίες του *la terre doit lui être assignée* (*Ασσίζες*). Υπάρχει λοιπόν μια αντίφαση μεταξύ των δύο πηγών σ'αυτό το σημείο.

αρχόντισσα κρατούνταν στην Κωνσταντινούπολη για το καλό του Πρίγκηπα. Επομένως δεν μπορούσε να παρουσιαστεί ενώπιον τους εντός των προκαθορισμένων χρονικών ορίων. Εν τούτοις εκπλήρωσε την υποχρέωσή της, όμως κατά την επιστροφή της τής είχε αφαιρεθεί η περιουσία της. Βλέποντας την έλλειψη σεβασμού στο πρόσωπό της και ακολουθώντας τη συμβουλή των φίλων της, αποφάσισε να ξαναπαντρευτεί. Από το επεισόδιο αυτό βλέπουμε τους περιορισμούς των δικαιωμάτων της ευγενούς γυναίκας στον Μορέα, κυρίως όταν αυτή είναι μόνη[96], εξ ου και το ενδιαφέρον ενός νέου γάμου προκειμένου ο σύζυγος να υπερασπιστεί τα δικαιώματά της. Η ίδια πηγή φανερώνει την επιλογή του μέλλοντα συζύγου: *a tel homme qui eust le sens et le pooir de demander son droit*[97]· προτιμήθηκε ο Jean de Saint-Omer. Ο συγκεκριμένος γάμος αποτελεί μια επιπλέον απόδειξη των πολιτικών συμφωνιών που συνόδευαν τις επιγαμίες. Ο νέος σύζυγος, Jean de Saint-Omer, έλαβε τον τίτλο του *marescalus* (πρωτοστράτορος) του Μορέα, που του μεταβιβάστηκε από την επιγαμία και μπορούσε να διεκδικήσει την κληρονομιά της γυναίκας του[98]. Ακολούθησε η πρόσκληση στη μεγάλη κούρτη του Πρίγκηπα, προκειμένου να απαντήσει στα αιτήματα των Saint-Omer και οι «λογομαχίες» που έγιναν μεταξύ του ηγεμόνα και του Nicolas de Saint-Omer, αδελφού του Jean. Από αυτό το σημείο ο έλεγχος της καταστάσεως ξέφυγε από την Marguerite, της οποίας τα συμφέροντα υπερασπίζονταν οι συγγενείς της. Το δικαστήριο συνήλθε στην Γλαρέντζα[99], έτσι ώστε να μπορέσει ο Πρίγκηπας να ενδυναμώσει την αυλή του από άντρες έμπειρους, επιβάλλοντας κυρίως τον λογοθέτη (*cancellarius*) Léonard de Véroli, που τού είχε δοθεί το δικαίωμα να εκδικάζει υποθέσεις[100].

Τελικά, ο Guillaume de Villehardouin κέρδισε τη δίκη παρουσιάζοντας ενώπιον των μελών της μεγάλης κούρτης το *Livre des usages*, στο οποίο

96. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §506, 199: *Car tant comme elle seroit vesve, elle ne porroit esploitier nulle chose ne venir a son entendement.*

97. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §506, 199.

98. *Αυτόθι*, §508, 200.

99. A. Tzavara, *Clarentza, une ville de la Morée latine, XIIIe-XVe siècles* [Institut hellènique d'études byzantines et post-byzantines de Venise. Tommaso Flangini 3], Venise 2008, 105-106.

100. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §516-517, 203-204. I. Ortega, L'inventaire de la bibliothèque de Léonard de Véroli. Témoignages des influences occidentales et orientales dans la principauté de Morée (fin XIII[e] siècle), στο: *L'autorité de l'écrit au Moyen Âge (Orient-Occident), XXXIX[e] Congrès de la SHMESP (Le Caire, 30 avril-5 mai 2008)*, Paris 2009, 196-201.

καταγράφονταν τα έθιμα του Πριγκηπάτου[101] και το οποίο περιείχε την απόδειξη ότι η Marguerite είχε φυλακιστεί για τον άρχοντά της. Έχασε λοιπόν την δίκη και της αφαιρέθηκε η κληρονομιά της από το δικαστήριο. Όμως, η ιστορία της προκάλεσε την ευσπλαχνία του Πρίγκηπα που αισθάνθηκε *grant pitié de madame Margerite la mareschallesse [femme du maréchal], pour ce que elle perdy son heritaige pour l'ocasion de moy*[102], και κατ' εξαίρεση τής εκχώρησε το ένα τρίτο της βαρονίας του Mathegriphon. Η περίπτωση αυτή δείχνει ότι η Marguerite de Passavant, αν και έχασε την περιουσία της, μπόρεσε να επανακτήσει ένα μέρος της, λόγω του πνεύματος δικαιοσύνης του Πρίγκηπα. Η Marguerite de Nully μπόρεσε και υπερασπίστηκε τα συμφέροντά της έναντι του Guillaume de Villehardouin αρχικά με το να ζητήσει από εκείνον μάταια αυτά που της όφειλαν και αργότερα με το να παντρευτεί έναν άντρα ικανό να την υπερασπιστεί. Έκανε δηλαδή τις επιλογές που της επιτρέπονταν.

Συνοψίζοντας, η Marguerite de Passavant αντιπροσωπεύει το αρχέτυπο της γυναίκας ευγενούς του Μορέως. Σε νεαρή ηλικία, οι πολιτικές ανάγκες και οι ανάγκες της οικογένειας την υπερέβησαν και βρέθηκε όμηρος για τον κύριό της. Ως ανύπαντρη μπορούσε να ελπίζει στην απόκτηση των δικαίων της. Στη σύναψη γάμου την εξώθησαν οι συγγενείς της και η ανάγκη να βρει έναν δυνατό σύμμαχο. Όταν πραγματοποιήθηκε ο δεσμός, ο καινούργιος σύζυγος εξασφάλισε την υπεράσπιση των δικαιωμάτων της, τα οποία επανεξετάσθηκαν μετά από νομική διαδικασία. Το πορτραίτο της Marguerite de Passavant είναι αφ' ενός μιας γυναίκας αποφασιστικής που δεν εγκαταλείπει την κληρονομιά της, αλλά συγχρόνως δείχνει την αδυναμία της να αγωνιστεί μόνη σε μια φεουδαλική διαμάχη.

Το *Χρονικό του Μορέως* και άλλες πηγές εμφανίζουν πολλές αντιδικίες σχετικά με τις διαπραγματεύσεις που επισφράγιζαν τις επιγαμίες. Η δημιουργία μιας οικογενειακής εστίας ήταν η ευκαιρία για τους συγγενείς να συνάψουν νέες σχέσεις τόσο πολιτικές όσο και οικονομικές, εντός των οποίων ερωτήματα υλικής φύσεως γίνονταν άκρως ενδιαφέροντα. Προκειμένου τα όποια ζητήματα να είναι εξ αρχής διευκρινισμένα, το συμβόλαιο γάμου καθόριζε τις εισφορές και τη θέση του καθενός. Παρόλα αυτά οι παγίδες δεν έλειπαν ήδη από τον δέκατο τρίτο αιώνα, όπως στην περίπτωση του Guy de la Roche, ο οποίος στα τέλη του δέκατου τρίτου αιώνα αντιτάχθηκε στην μητέρα του, δούκισσα Ελένη. Σε πολλές περιπτώσεις η δούκισσα είχε την υποστήριξη του Ανδεγαυού βασιλέα

101. *Le Livre de la conqueste*, §521, 206.

102. *Αυτόθι*, §524, 207.

και της πριγκήπισσας Ισαβέλλας που επενέβησαν για να αποκαταστήσουν την περιουσία της. Πράγματι, ο γιός της τής στέρησε την κινητή περιουσία της, αλλά κυρίως την Μονή de Stiro που αποτελούσε το βασικότερο μέρος της επικληρίας της[103]. Μέχρι τον θάνατό της και παρά τις πριγκηπικές παρεμβάσεις, η Ελένη Κομνηνή Αγγελίνα δεν επανέκτησε τα δίκαιά της.

Οι προγαμιαίες συναλλαγές, καθώς και αυτές που σχετίζονταν με οποιαδήποτε μορφή περιουσίας, παρουσίαζαν τόσο μεγάλο ενδιαφέρον που δεν έλειπαν οι αντιδικίες. Οι πηγές καταγράφουν έναν ικανό αριθμό περιπτώσεων, όπου το εθιμικό δίκαιο δεν γινόταν πάντα σεβαστό, γιατί η προίκα και η επικληρία προκαλούσαν την ζηλοφθονία των στενών συγγενών που δεν δίσταζαν να τις αρπάξουν[104]. Παρά τις όποιες νομικές διαδικασίες, οι γυναίκες σπάνια έβρισκαν το δίκιο τους, διότι δεν πολεμούσαν με τα ίδια όπλα. Μπορούσαν μόνο να καταφύγουν στη σύναψη ενός νέου γάμου, αναθέτοντας στον άντρα την υποχρέωση να υπερασπιστεί τα δικαιώματά τους. Η ανάλυση των διαφόρων περιπτώσεων και της νομοθεσίας μάς επιτρέπουν να αξιολογήσουμε το χάσμα μεταξύ θεωρίας και πράξης. Εκείνο το οποίο φαίνεται να προκύπτει από την ανάλυση των οικονομικών συναλλαγών που σχετίζονται με τους γαμικούς δεσμούς είναι η απουσία ενός μόνο μοντέλου στην Πελοπόννησο. Στην πραγματικότητα οι δυτικές οικογένειες εισήγαγαν η καθεμιά το σύστημα που χρησιμοποιούνταν στις επαρχίες καταγωγής τους και το εφάρμοσαν στο Πριγκηπάτο.

Επίλογος

Οι ευγενείς γυναίκες επεδείκνυαν διαφορετικές συμπεριφορές ανάλογα με το στάδιο της ζωής τους. Στη νεότητά τους ήταν πιο εύκολα χειραγωγήσιμες, δεν ήλεγχαν τη σύναψη γάμου, που ενίοτε επαναλαμβανόταν αρκετές φορές, ανάλογα με τις επιθυμίες της οικογένειας. Όμως, ως ενήλικες έπαιζαν ένα

103. Πρόκειται για την Μονή του Οσίου Λουκά Στειριώτη, κοντά στη Λιβαδιά. Το επεισόδιο χρονολογείται το 1299, βλ. J. Longnon και C. Perrat, *Actes relatifs à la principauté de Morée, 1289-1300*, Paris 1967, 190, 192, 198· R. J. Loenertz, Hosios Lukas de Stiris dans quelques documents latins (1210-1309), *Θησαυρίσματα* 11 (1974), 21-36· N. I. Tsougarakis, *The Latin Religious Orders in Medieval Greece, 1204-1500* [Medieval Church Studies 18], Turnhout 2012, 265.

104. Ο Pierre Joan εργάζεται στην αδημοσίευτη διαθήκη της Marguerite de Villehardouin, τις τελευταίες εκδοχές της οποίας παρουσίασε στο συνέδριο «Élites chrétiennes et formes du pouvoir en Méditerranée centrale et orientale XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle» που διοργάνωσα μαζί με την Marie-Anna Chevalier τον Ιούνιο του 2015 στη Nîmes-Montpellier.

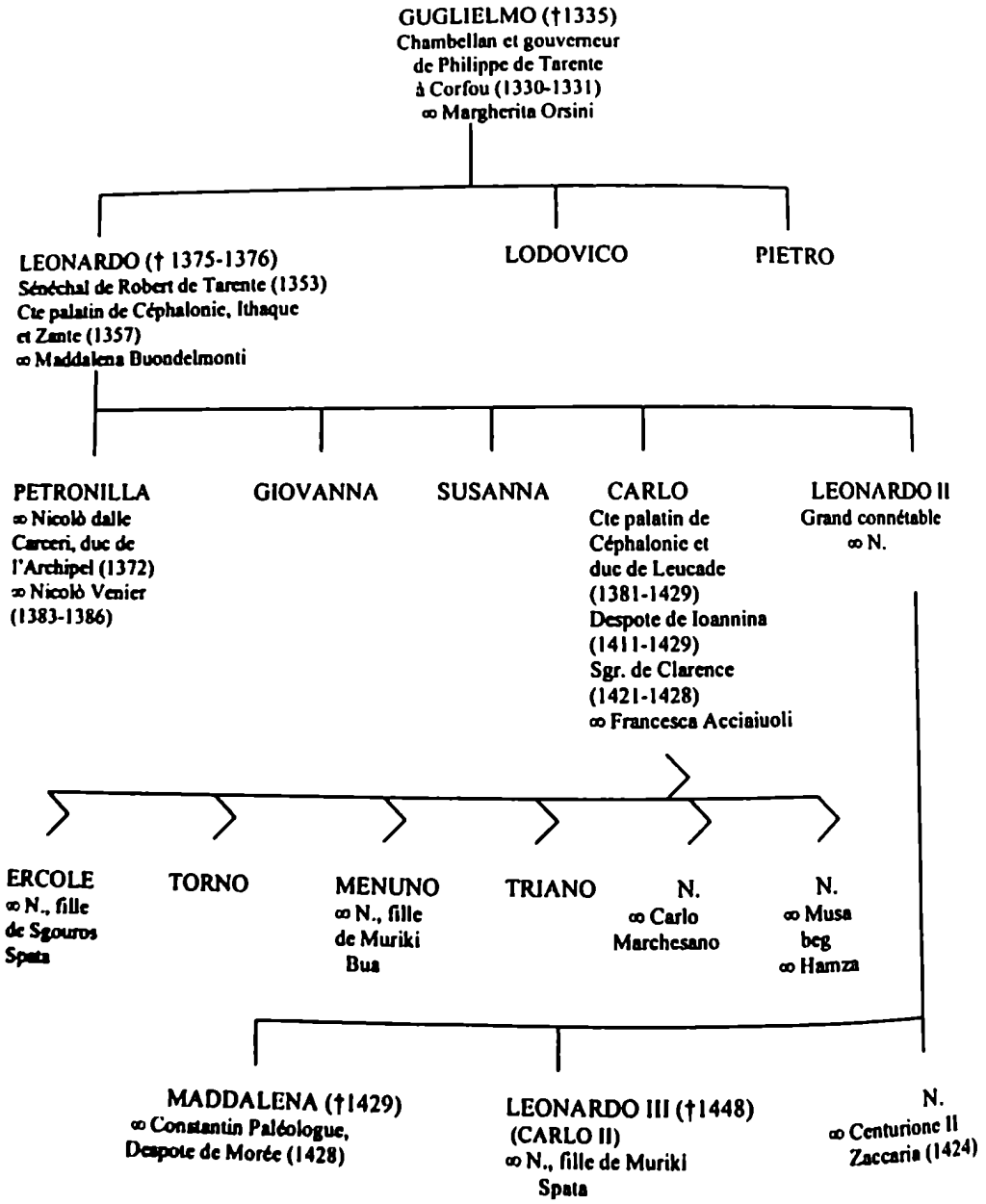
περισσότερο αποφασιστικό ρόλο εντός του οικογένειας (γένους) τους και δεν ήταν απλά ένα πιόνι σε στρατηγικά σχέδια, στα οποία οι ίδιες ήταν αμέτοχες. Μέσα από την ανάληψη διοικητικών, πολιτικών και σπανιότερα στρατιωτικών ευθυνών, μερικές γυναικείες προσωπικότητες κατάφεραν να επιβληθούν κατακτώντας πρωτεύουσα θέση στα πλαίσια των οικογενειακών δομών, αλλά και ευρύτερα στην κοινωνία. Ωστόσο, οι πιέσεις δεν έλειπαν. Για θέματα που σχετίζονταν με την εξουσία και την κληρονομιά, οι προσωπικές επιθυμίες των γυναικών ενίοτε παραμερίζονταν. Λίγες πηγές μας επιτρέπουν να σκιαγραφήσουμε τις γυναικείες προσωπικότητες στην πολυπλοκότητά τους. Ωστόσο, μια εξαίρεση πρέπει να σημειωθεί, αυτή της Marguerite de Nully, της οποίας η τύχη είναι εμφανής στο *Χρονικόν του Μορέως*.

Φαίνεται ότι, όταν οι νέες γυναίκες ενηλικιώνονταν, παρέμεναν ένα θέμα έντονα πολιτικό: ή ήταν συνδετικοί κρίκοι ενός μεγάλου πολιτικού παιχνιδιού, ή φορείς κεφαλαίου μέσω της προίκας που κατείχαν ή τέλος γίνονταν περιζήτητες για την κληρονομιά που μπορούσαν να μεταβιβάσουν. Όταν χήρευαν, η αριστοκρατική κοινωνία δεν τις παραμέριζε, διότι διατηρούσαν ή δημιουργούσαν κοινωνικούς δεσμούς. Αυτή η διαπίστωση ανταποκρίνεται στο σύνολο της αριστοκρατίας του Μορέως, της οποίας η γυναίκα αποτελούσε ένα ουσιώδες στοιχείο. Άλλοτε υποταγμένες και υπό επίβλεψη, άλλοτε χειραφετημένες από την ανδρική κηδεμονία, οι αρχόντισσες του Μορέως μας προσφέρουν έναν μεγάλο αριθμό παραδειγμάτων προς μελέτη.

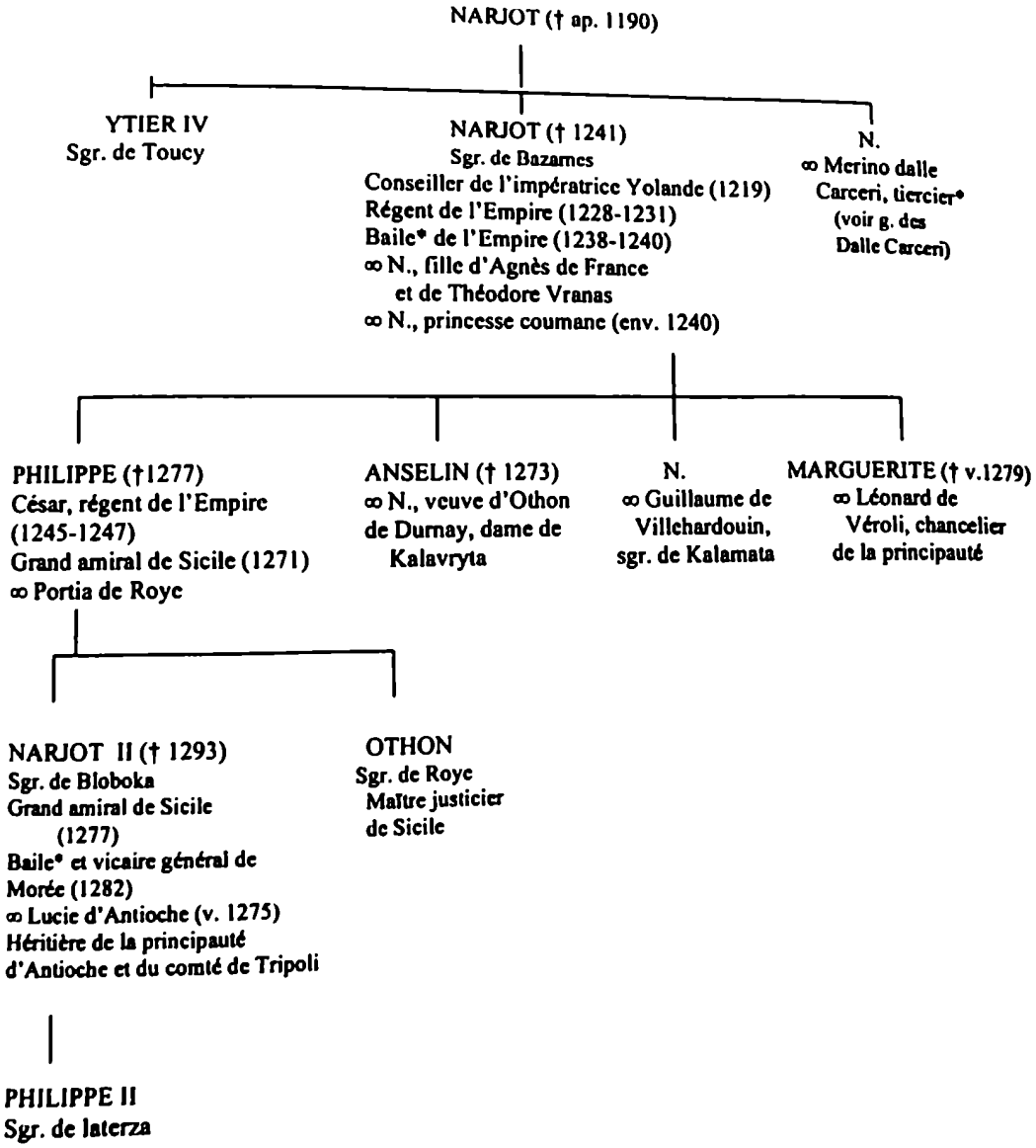
Από την παραπάνω ανάλυση προκύπτει μια αντιφατική εικόνα των αρχοντισσών του Πριγκηπάτου, γιατί ακόμα και από τις πιο ισχυρές γυναίκες δεν μπορούσε να λείψει η ανδρική υποστήριξη, είτε ενός πατέρα, ή ενός συζύγου, ενός θείου, ενός ανηψιού ή ακόμη ενός γιου. Μερικές ήταν πεπειραμένες στην εξουσία, αλλά η θέση τους ήταν πάντοτε ευάλωτη, καθώς οποιαδήποτε στιγμή ένας μνηστήρας μπορούσε να την αμφισβητήσει. Αντικείμενα οικονομικών συναλλαγών καθ' όλη την διάρκεια της ζωής τους, οι γυναίκες συγκέντρωναν στο πρόσωπό τους τις ανησυχίες όλων των ευγενών που ήθελαν να προφυλάξουν, ή ακόμη περισσότερο να αυξήσουν την κληρονομιά τους. Έτσι η συγγένεια χρησιμοποιούνταν κατά τον καλύτερο δυνατό τρόπο από τις αριστοκρατικές οικογένειες της Πελοποννήσου, γιατί αντιστοιχούσε σε μια δύναμη και ένα πλεονέκτημα, το οποίο καθημερινά τους επέτρεπε να εξασφαλίσουν την υπεροχή τους επί του υπολοίπου πληθυσμού του Πριγκηπάτου του Μορέως και να διατηρήσουν έτσι το κύρος τους.

Παράρτημα

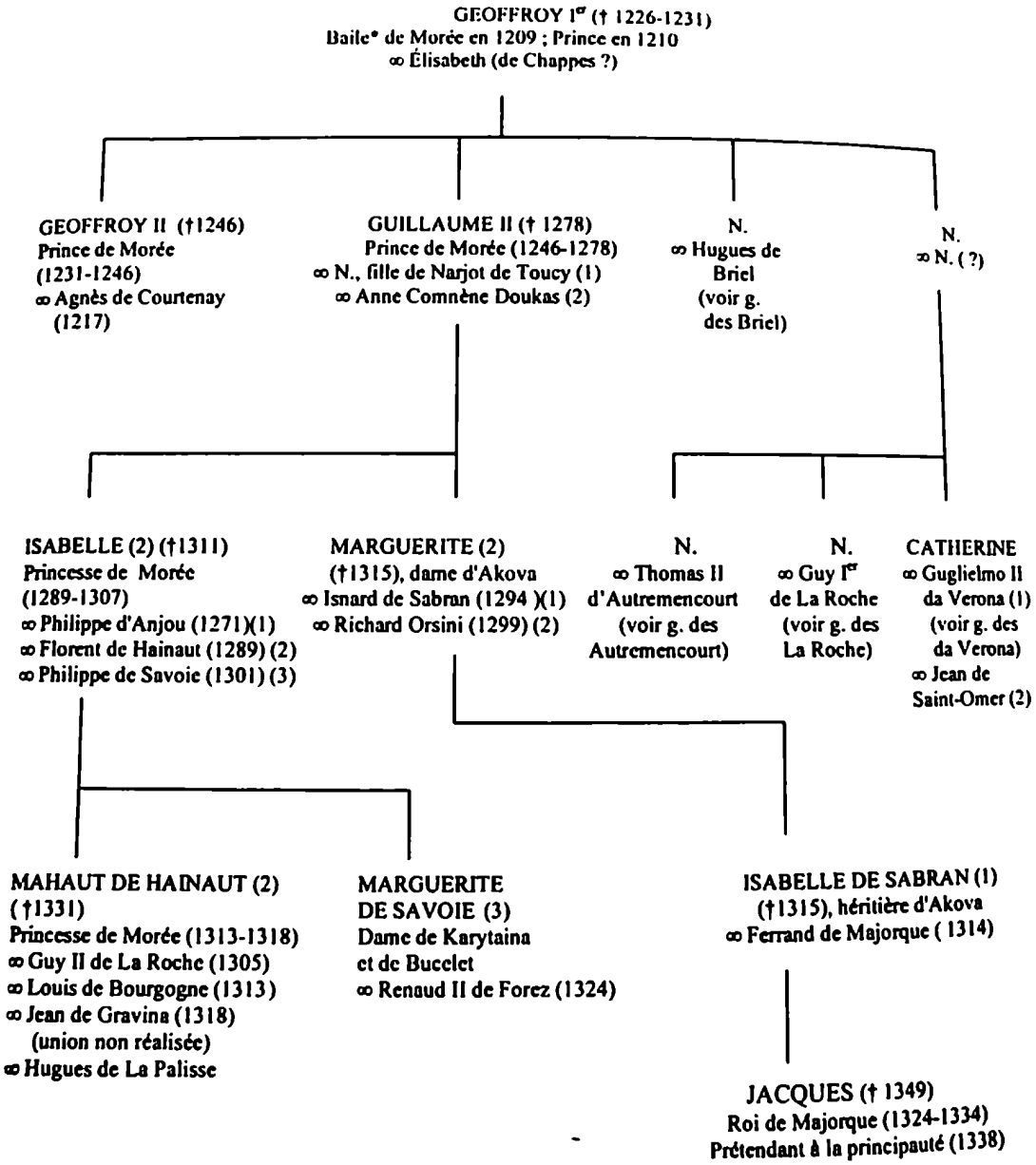
1. Γενεαλογία των Τόκκο



2. Γενεαλογία των Toucy



2. Γενεαλογία των Villehardouin



Taisiya Leber*

Between Veil and Tomb: Nuns and their Burial Places in Early Russia (11th-12th centuries)

The most important problem in the study of female monasticism in medieval Russia[1], as well as in most parts of the Eastern Mediterranean, is the lack of written sources. The chronicles mention only the nunneries founded for aristocratic women or by ladies from the ruling dynasties[2]. The first female monasteries were family foundations. Princes' wives supported their family churches or monasteries financially and participated actively in the life of these establishments, before ultimately finding their final rest there.

Modern scholars also point out the lack of manuscripts attributable to nuns, as well as narrative texts written by women for other nuns. At the same time, the *Lives* and charters authored by men hardly reflect the real influence or importance of women's donations to the Church, their connections to the hierarchs and clergy, or their involvement in the ecclesiastic affairs. The fact that the rulers' spouses were often of foreign origin (Byzantine or Western) led later

---

* Research Fellow at the Department of History (Byzantine Studies) at Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz.

1. On the history of medieval Russia, see S. Franklin and J. Shepard, *The Emergence of Rus' 750-1200*, London 1996; J. Meyendorff, *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century*, London–New York 1981; D. Obolensky, *The Byzantine Commonwealth. Eastern Europe, 400-1453*, London 1971, repr. New York 1982, 298ff; M. Perrie (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. I: *From Early Rus' to 1689*, Cambridge 2006; A. Kappeler, *Rußland als Vielvölkerreich: Entstehung-Geschichte-Zerfall*, Munich 2008. For Church history in Russia, see J. Fennell, *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*, London–New York 1995.

2. On the role of female founders in medieval Russia, see A. Michalowska, Klostergründungen russischer Fürstinnen im dreizehnten Jahrhundert, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis, M. Mullett, M. Grünbart, G. Fingarova and M. Savage [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna–Cologne–Weimar 2011/2012, 275-283.

chroniclers to downplay their role on confessional or national grounds. One example is the famous and earliest *Church Statute* of Prince Vladimir, a legal code that regulated the status and relations between the princely administration and the clergy. Whereas the *Volynskaja* copy from the thirteenth century (1282) mentions the wife of the prince, the Byzantine princess Anna, who donated numerous icons, vessels, and a richly decorated Gospel to the churches of St Savior and Theotokos (Church of the Tithes) in Kiev[3], in the later versions of the Statute this episode of her donation is missing.

This article is an attempt to collect information about the first female monastic communities and female patronage of monasteries. We base our approach on how aristocratic women tried to achieve salvation by fostering a mutually beneficial relationship with monasteries where their support and protection guaranteed them both burial in the sacred space[4] of the monastery and commemoration by the monks[5].

The first references to nunneries in Medieval Russia date back to the last decades of the eleventh century. The *Life* of Theodosius in *Kiev-Pechersk Paterik* mentions one of them –a nunnery of St Nicholas in Kiev, where the mother of the St Theodosius took her monastic vows[6]. This episode from the *Life* presumably dates to the period before 1074, as Theodosius was still alive and joined the monk Antony in the caves of Kiev, the future Kiev Monastery of the Caves[7].

---

3. Ya. N. Shchapov (ed.), *Drevnerusskie knjažeskie ustavy XI-XV vv.*, Moscow 1976, 70. On the Statute of Prince Vladimir, see E. V. Belyakova and T. Leber, Ustav velikogo knjazja Vladimira v kontekste drevnejših slavjanskih pravovyh pamjatnikov, in: *Rus' epohi Vladimira Velikogo: gosudarstvo, cerkov', kul'tura*, ed. by N. A. Makarov and A. B. Nazarenko, Moscow–Vologda 2017, 204-228.

4. On the concept of sacred space, see M. Kaplan (ed.), *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident. Études comparées* [Byzantina Sorbonensia 18], Paris 2001.

5. On the role of Russian monasteries as centres of commemoration, see L. Steindorff, *Memoria in Altrußland: Untersuchungen zu den Formen christlicher Totensorge* [Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte des *östlichen* Europas 38], Stuttgart 1994; Idem, Manastiri kao središta srkrbi za mrtve u staroj Rusiji, *Otium* 2/3-4 (1994), 29-37.

6. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik, ili skazanija o* žitii *i podvigah svjatyh ugodnikov Kievo-Pečerskoj Lavry*, Kiev 1991, 26-27; G. Pasini, *Il monachesimo nella Rus' di Kiev*, Bologna 2011.

7. The bibliography of the history of Kiev-Pečersk Lavra, its monastic founders and saints is immense. I cite therefore here only some essential studies which contain also important bibliographical data: M. Priselkov, *Očerki po cerkovno-političeskoj istorii Kievskoj Rusi*

The story of how Theodosius' mother took the veil invites closer examination. In his *Life*, his mother appears very often as a predominantly negative character. She is represented as a "strong woman", first of all due to her extraordinary physical strength which she used against her own son to make him obey her and hinder him from his desire to leave the world and follow Christ[8]. In the *Life* there is not a great deal of evidence about Theodosius' parents. It reports that they were pious Christians[9] and that they were sent by the prince of Kiev to the town of Kursk, where the saint spent his young years. After his father's death, his mother never remarried. The fact that she hindered her son's attempt to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and her harsh treatment of him after bringing him back are regarded as a manifestation of her particular attachment to Theodosius, because "she loved the boy more than her other children and she missed him dearly when he was absent"[10]. According to the author of the *Life* of Nestor, she thus contributed to fulfilling God's intention for her son that was to spread the Christian belief and monastic values in his homeland[11].

X-XII vv., Sankt Petersburg 1913, repr. The Hague 1966, 165-237; Ya. N. Shchapov, *State and Church in Early Russia 10th-13th Centuries*, Moscow 1993, 172-174; G. Podskalsky, *Christentum und theologische Literatur in der Kiever Rus' (988-1237)*, Munich 1982, 122-126; I. K. Smolič, *Russkoe monašestvo 988-1917*, Moscow 1999, 24-28; S. Senyk, *A History of the Church in Ukraine*, vol. I, Rome 1993, 247-276; A. Poppe, *Studity na Rusi. Istoki i načal'naja istorija Kievo-Pečerskogo monastyrja*, Kiev 2011; Cl. Farrimond, Founders, Refounders and Copiers: the Application of the Typikon of Alexios the Stoudite at the Kievan Caves Monastery, in: *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries*, ed. by M. Mullett [Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 6.3], Belfast 2007, 273-314.

8. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 20-27. The resistance of the parents to the child's decision to enter a monastery can be explained as a "topos" in hagiography: T. Pratsch, *Der hagiographische Topos. Griechische Heiligenviten in mittelbyzantinischer Zeit* [Millennium Studies 6], Berlin–New York 2005, 170-183.

9. "Pious parents" are also a widespread "topos" in Byzantine *Lives* of saints: Pratsch, *Der hagiographische Topos*, 66-68.

10. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 22.

11. It is no surprise that the medieval author found an appropriate justification for Theodosius' mother, who was against her son's pilgrimage to Jerusalem. For the author of the *Life* of Nestor missionary work in the homeland was probably more valuable than the long journey to the Holy Land. The voices against pilgrimages were not rare in Christian theological production, beginning with the famous letter (2.3) of Gregory of Nyssa: "When the Lord called the chosen ones to inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 25:34), he did not include the journey to Jerusalem among the good deeds", see Br. Bitton-Ashkelony, *Encountering the Sacred: The Debate on Christian Pilgrimage in Late Antiquity* [The

After Theodosius joined Antony, his mother searched for him and found him in the Caves of Kiev. She wanted to bring him back home so that he would take care of her until her death. He suggested that if she wanted to see him regularly, she had to stay in Kiev and take the veil in one of the city's nunneries. It took some persuading, but in the end he convinced her about "how negligible this passing world is"[12]. She decided to take the monastic vows and stay in the nunnery until her death. Theodosius asked the reverend Antony to talk to her; "he (Antony) instructed her about the benefits for the soul and afterwards he told the princess about her and sent her to a nunnery of St Nicholas, where she became a nun and where she was laid to rest, after having spent numerous years there"[13]. This last fragment is crucial for the history of female monasticism in medieval Russia. It becomes evident that at the end of the eleventh century there were several convents in Kiev, among others the nunnery of St Nicholas on the Dnieper[14]. This fragment raises the question of why Antony contacted the princess of Kiev before sending Theodosius' mother to a convent. It is not known whether she was a founder of this nunnery or whether she was the female patron of this or of all Kievan princely female monasteries. The historian Michael Priselkov also paid attention to this episode in order to support his thesis about a special relationship between the Cave Monastery and the ruling prince of Kiev[15].

It is important to notice that the Cave Monastery was a rare exception among the Russian monasteries of the time since it was administered primarily by the monks themselves. Its contemporaries were predominantly princely monasteries–rulers' religious foundations, closed aristocratic institutions devoted to the religious needs of the princely family[16]. For example, Prince Jaroslav the Wise (r. 1019-1054) initiated the construction of two monasteries

---

Transformation of the Classical Heritage 38], Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 2005, 30-64; D. DYAS, Medieval Patterns of Pilgrimage: A Mirror for Today?, in: *Explorations in a Christian Theology of Pilgrimage*, ed. by C. G. BARTHOLOMEW and FR. HUGHES, Aldershot 2004, 92-109.

12. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 27 (all Slavonic texts are given in my translation).

13. *Ibidem*, 27.

14. M. C. FERRO, *Santità e agiografia al femminile. Forme letterarie, tipologie e modelli nel mondo slavo orientale (X-XVII sec.)* [Biblioteca di Studi Slavistici 11], Florence 2010, 21.

15. PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 173, 185.

16. SHCHAPOV, *State and Church* (as in footnote 7), 155.

– St George (1051) and St Eirene (around 1050?). Both were dedicated to the name saints of the grand princes (the Christian name of Jaroslav was George and of his wife, Swedish princess Ingigerd–Eirene)[17]. The first nunnery in Old Rus' was founded in 1086 in Kiev by the prince of Kiev Vsevolod Jaroslavič (1030-1093) for his daughter Anna/Janka Vsevolodovna (died 1112 or 1113). It was dedicated to St Andrew and it is a later foundation than the convent mentioned in the *Life* of St Theodosius. According to the *Russian Primary Chronicle* (*Povest' vremennyh let*): "He built a church of St Andrew in the time of the reverend metropolitan John and made a monastery in this church, where his daughter called Janka was tonsured. This Janka gathered many nuns and stayed with them in accordance with the monastic rule (rite–slav. čin)"[18]. It is clear that Anna/Janka took her monastic vows in this princely endowment, she brought together a female monastic community and most probably became the first abbess there.

Taking this into consideration, we can assume that the nunnery of St Nicholas was also a princely foundation that remained under the control of a noble patroness (or even foundress), Gertrude of Poland (*ca.*1025-*ca.*1108). This could explain the special intercession of the princess for Theodosius' mother in order to get the permission to enter the monastery despite her lower social status. As Nestor writes in the *Life* of Theodosius, it was not so easy even for him to find an appropriate monastery in Kiev: "After arriving to Kiev he visited all the monasteries, willing to be a monk and begging the ones living there to admit him. But they, seeing a poor and dressed in bad clothes youth, did not want to accept him"[19]. It can be suggested that his mother was not wealthy enough to be accepted in an aristocratic nunnery in Kiev without the recommendation of the princess[20].

---

17. *Ibidem*, 155; Smolič, *Russkoe monašestvo* (as in footnote 7), 24-25; Ferro, *Santità e agiografia* (as in footnote 14), 21. L. Morozova (*Velikie i neizvestnye ženšiny Drevnej Rusi*, Moscow 2009, 196) suggested that the monastery of St Eirene was founded by Yaroslav's wife Ingigerd, which, however, cannot be proved. On the personality of Ingigerd-Eirene and her daughters, see *ibidem*, 172-211.

18. *Vsevolod založi cerkov' svjatago Andreja pri Ivane prepodobnom mitropolite. Stvori ou cerkvi toja manastyr'. v nem že postrižese dshi ego. Devoju imenem Janka. Sija že Janka sovokupiši* černorizici *mnogi. prebyvaše s nimi. po manastyr'skomu činu*, see *Polnoe sobranie russkih letopisej* (= *PSRL*), vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'*, Moscow 1962, 1086, 197.

19. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 24.

20. The question on the differences between female monasteries in medieval Russia, based on the social background of the nuns is still not adequately studied. On this problem

It is also unclear why Antony did not contact the abbess of the nunnery (if there was one), but instead talked directly to the princess. The author of Theodosius' *Life* called St Nicholas as *ženski monastyr* (= female monastery), but there is no evidence about the structure of this nunnery (presuming that is what it was), nor are the abbess or any other nuns mentioned. Some historians even call into question whether the famous contemporary Janka's Andreevskij monastery was a nunnery. Karger argued that the Andreevskij monastery was some kind of Vsevolod's "family monastery" in the 1080s, where 1086 Vsevolod added a stone church and dedicated it to St Andrew[21]. Based on some later sources from the twelfth century, which mentioned only several male abbots of the Andreevskij monastery, Shchapov doubted that it was founded as a nunnery. He argued that, "If the institution had been specially created for the prince's daughter, it should have been a nunnery. But were there nunneries in Kiev, or in Rus' for that matter, in the eleventh century? It is possible that there were mixed monasteries where the abbot was male, but there were cells for nuns in addition to those for monks"[22]. Later studies still concluded that Anna/Janka was herself an abbess of the monastery and that only her high status as daughter of the prince and abbess of the princely foundation could have explained the decision to send her to Byzantium in 1089 with a mission to choose a new metropolitan for Rus'. The *Russian Primary Chronicle* mentions this episode, reporting that, "Vsevolod's daughter called Janka went to Greeks and brought a metropolitan named John Eunuch (*Skopets*)"[23].

Another important issue is what kind of monastic institution the convent of St Nicholas was. Assuming that it was a princely foundation under the direct patronage of the ruler's wife, princess Gertrude, intended to host aristocratic women, it was probably a community of widows, who were tonsured nuns after

---

during the Early Modern Age, see A. SCHMÄHLING, Vom Nutzen der Klausur: Religiöse und gesellschaftliche Funktionen der Frauenklöster im Moskauer Reich, in: *Religion und Integration im Moskauer Russland. Konzepte und Praktiken, Potentiale und Grenzen 14.-17. Jahrhundert*, ed. by L. STEINDORFF [Forschungen zur osteuropäischen Geschichte 76], Wiesbaden 2010, 461-476, esp. 473.

21. M. K. KARGER, *Drevnij Kiev*, vol. II, Moscow–Leningrad 1961, 411.

22. SHCHAPOV, *State and Church* (as in footnote 7), 160.

23. He died shortly after arriving to Rus': *PSRL*, vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1089, 200. According to M. PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 163-164, she was entrusted with this mission by her father, prince Vsevolod, who was in conflict with a metropolitan due to the marriage of his daughter Eupraxia to a Latin king.

their husbands' deaths, mostly late in life. By joining this monastic community Theodosius' mother could spend her last years in the convent and "rest in peace" there, as well as be buried in the sacred space of the convent. We lack evidence as to whether nunneries were divided between those for virgin nuns and those for widows in pre-Mongol Russia. Morozova suggested that the nunnery of St Andrew (Andreevskij) which Vsevolod founded for his daughter Anna/Janka, was actually the first case where a young princess became a nun and founded a new convent instead of getting married; there she also organised a school for young girls[24] and probably established a monastic community for virgins.

The division between monasteries for virgin nuns and widowed nuns appears in a later *Life* of Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija (Theodulia) of Suzdal' who lived in the first half of the thirteenth century (*Life* 15/16th century)[25]. She was a female founder and a nun herself; she initiated a "monastic reform" in the city of Suzdal', dividing the space of the convent between virgins and girls on the one hand, and married women and widows on the other. After taking her monastic vows in the Rizopoloženskii nunnery of Suzdal', Euphrosyne/ Eufrosinija erected a new foundation inside the monastery –a church that was supposed to gather only virgin nuns. Non-tonsured unmarried women were also excluded from praying with the nuns. However, Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija denied access to her church to married or widowed women. They were not allowed to enter the church or to communicate with virgin nuns even inside the nunnery[26]. It is impossible to know, if the practice of dividing virgins and widows was common in other female monasteries in medieval Russia. The concept of such a division derives from very ancient religious ideas about

24. MOROZOVA, *Velikie i neizvestnye* ženšiny (as in footnote 17), 275.

25. On the influence of the older *Life* of Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija of Polock on her namesake's *Life* of Suzdal', see V. GEORGIEVSKIJ, *Suzdal'skij Rizopoloženskij* ženskij *monastyr'*, Vladimir 1900, 9-70. On the history of the *Life* (*Žitie*) of Eufrosinija of Suzdal' and the image of this female saint in a comparative perspective, see FERRO, *Santità e agiografia* (as in footnote 14), 76, 154, 187-195. On monk Gregorius, the probable author of the *Life* and *officium*, see B. M. KLOSS, *Izbrannye trudy*, II, *Očerki po istorii agiografii XIV-XVI vekov*, Moscow 2001, 377-404. Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija was at first revered as a saint only on a local level. In the sixteenth century, the Church canonized her because of her miracles. In 1693 her coffin was opened and her incorruptible relics were found. That offered the opportunity to the nunnery to become a pilgrimage center and in this sense to increase its prosperity, see SCHMÄHLING, *Vom Nutzen der Klausur* (as in footnote 20), 471.

26. N. P. BARSUKOV, *Istočniki drevnerusskoj agiografii*, Sankt Petersburg 1882, 179-181.

the particular spiritual cleanliness and holiness of virgins dedicated to God. Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija aimed at separating "the brides of the Christ" from the women who had experienced family life. There is, though, no evidence of this type of division in Byzantine practice. However, it resembles attempts by monks to organise their monastic communities according to ascetic rules and traditions in the caves instead of relying on the power of a princely founder.

The information about Antony and the princess of Kiev raises a further question about the relationship between the ascetic monk and the ruler's wife, the Polish princess Gertrude (1025-*ca.* 1086 or 1108). This highly educated woman is famous due to her personal Latin prayer-book (known as Trier Psalter, or Egbert Psalter, or Gertrude Psalter), an illuminated manuscript, dated in the middle of eleventh century. It is currently preserved in the Museum of Cividale in Italy (Ms. CXXXVI); the Prayer book includes her own religious texts, composed in accordance with the Latin calendar and tradition[27]. Gertrude, daughter of the Polish King Mieszko II and the Queen Richeza of Lotharingia, married prince Izjaslav of Kiev in 1043. It was a dynastic marriage, designed to strengthen the union between the two states. The pious Western princess Gertrude was presumably the spiritual daughter of the Reverend Antony from the Cave Monastery, since he could ask her to "reserve a place in the nunnery" for Theodosius' mother[28]. Gertrude's prayer-book demonstrates that she remained devoted to the Pope and the Latin rite even during her stay in Kiev[29], although this did not hinder her from actively participating in the local

27. On Gertrude and her famous manuscript, see A. ANDRZEJUK, *Gertruda Mieszkówna i jej modlitewnik*, Warsaw 2006; B. LISTKOWSKA and A. ANDRZEJUK (eds.), *Gertruda Mieszkówna i jej molitwy: praca zbiorowa*, Warsaw 2010; A. V. NAZARENKO, "Zelo nepodobno pravovernym". Mežkonfessional'nye braki na Rusi v XI-XII vv., in: *Drevnjaja Rus' i slavjane (istoriko-filologičeskie issledovanija)*, Moscow 2009, 269-283 (an electronic version of this article is also available in: http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=lib&id=1735).

N. I. SČAVELEVA, K izučeniju molitvennika knjagini Gertrudy, in: *Vostočnaja Evropa v drevnosti i srednevekovje: problemy istočnikovedenija*, Moscow 1990, 147-150; EADEM, Privatnye molitvy ženy Izjaslava, in: *Cerkov' v istorii Rossii*, Moscow 1999, vol. III, 4-20.

28. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 27.

29. That is indicated in the princess' prayer, "About our Pope and about our prince and about our emperor and our bishops", ed. V. MEYSZTOWICZ, Manuscriptum Gertrudae filiae Mesconis II regis Poloniae, in: *Antemurale: Dissertationes in X Internationali congressu scientiarum historicarum Romae A. MCMLV a sociis Societatis historicae Polonorum in exteris praesentatae*, vol. II, Rome 1955, 103-157, here at 155. On the confessional affiliation

ecclesiastical affairs. It is also known that during a conflict between the abbot of the Cave Monastery Nikon and her husband, the prince of Kiev Izjaslav (1061), Gertrude played a key role as mediator, persuading Izjaslav to come to terms with the monastery[30]. According to Nestor, "the princess started to entreat the prince not to expel servants of God from his domain because of his anger. In this regard, the princess brought up the example of God's wrath that befell her fatherland, the Polish lands, due to the banishment of the monks"[31]. This is actually the first reference to her Polish origin. The conflict was only resolved due to her intervention. It is obvious that the princess revered Antony and wanted to protect him and his monastery from the ruler[32]. Such a relationship between the Western princess and the monks of the Cave monastery was possible only if Gertrude's piety was not questioned by Antony or the Russian clergy in spite of her Latin origin. In that period anti-Latin rhetoric was more typical for the Greek metropolitans. For instance, the metropolitan of Kiev John II (1078-1089), originally from Constantinople, tried albeit unsuccessfully to prevent the dynastic union between the Russian princess Eupraxia Vsevolodovna and Henry I, count of Stade and markgrave of the Saxon Northern March[33].

Gertrude's reputation and diplomatic skills allowed her husband and her son Jaropolk/Peter to initiate contacts with Pope Gregory VII (1075), who promised his support to the princess in getting back their Kiev throne and Rus' as a *patrocinium beati Petri*. After the death of her husband Prince Izjaslav (1078), Gertrude probably took monastic vows. This could explain the prayer from her psalter for the commemoration of the souls of the deceased "brothers and sisters from our community (*congregatio*)"[34]. Meanwhile, Gertude's Psalter

---

of Gertrude and her devotion to Catholicism during her life in Kiev, see NAZARENKO, "Zelo nepodobno pravovernym" (as in footnote 27), 269-283.

30. *Kievo-Pečerskij Paterik* (as in footnote 6), 11.

31. *Ibidem*, 1: *Pri etom knjaginja ukazyvala na primere gneva Božija, postigšago otečestvo eja, zemlju ljahskuju, za izgnanie černorizcev.*

32. PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 187.

33. NAZARENKO, "Zelo nepodobno pravovernym" (as in footnote 27) (http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=lib&id=1735); PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 164. On the anti-Latin polemics in Old Rus' initiated by Greek metropolitans of Kiev, see PODSKALSKY, *Christentum und theologische Literatur* (as in footnote 7), 172-184.

34. MEYSZTOWICZ, Manuscriptum Gertrudae (as in footnote 29), 155, see also NAZARENKO, "Zelo nepodobno pravovernym" (as in footnote 27) (http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=lib&id=1735).

would go on to play an even more impressive role in the history of female monasticism and sanctity in Western Europe. It is assumed that this prayer-book was transmitted only through the female line. Gertrude's granddaughter Sbyslava Svjatopolkovna, the wife of Boleslav III, brought it to Poland. In the twelfth century, the codex was in possession of the Andechs-Merania family, and was given to Elizabeth of Hungary either by her mother, Gertrude of Merania, or by her aunt, Saint Hedwig of Andechs. According to a sixteenth-century note (on folio 8), it was St Elizabeth of Hungary, who donated the codex to the cathedral of Cividale in 1229[35].

From the end of the eleventh century, many other aristocratic women demonstrated a particular interest in the Cave Monastery, which started to be especially popular as a burial place. The *Russian Primary Chronicle* indicates that after Theodosius became an abbot of the Monastery he took care not only of his monks but also of the laity, his spiritual sons and daughters. He taught them how to achieve the salvation of the soul. He even visited the couple Jan and Maria in their house, because he especially loved them for their pious life[36]:

> "Once he visited them and he instructed them about the alms to the paupers and about the Kingdom of Heaven...and about the hour of death. And as he was talking about the placing of a body in the tomb, Jan's [wife] said to him: who knows where I will be placed? And Theodosius said to her–verily there, where I will lie, there also you will be laid"[37].

Maria passed away on 16th August, 1091, two days after Theodosius' death, according to the Chronicle: "And the monks came, they chanted the usual [for the funeral rite] cantos. They brought her and placed her in the church of Theotokos opposite to the Theodosius' tomb"[38]. Such a detailed description in the Chronicle functions as an explanation for the fact that a woman, who did not belong to the ruler's family and was not a nun herself, was buried in

---

35. *Sankt Elisabeth: Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige. Aufsätze, Dokumentation, Katalog.* Sigmaringen 1981, 336-338.

36. *Theodosii bo be ljubja ja. Zaneže* živjasta *po zapovide Gospodne. i v ljubvi* živjasta: *PSRL*, vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1091, 203.

37. *PSRL*, vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1091, 203.

38. *I prišedše černorisci. pevše obychnya pesni. I prinesše ju i položiša ju. ou cerkvi. Sviatya Bogorodica. protivu grobu Theodosjevu*: *PSRL*, vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1091, 204.

the narthex of the main church[39] of a male monastery famous for its ascetic traditions and independence from any lay or spiritual authorities[40].

Another woman strongly attached to the Cave Monastery and St Theodosius was princess Anastasia (died 1158), prince Yaropolk's (died 1086) daughter and wife of the prince Gleb Vseslavič (died 1119). The "Hypatian Codex" retains an extract from the book of endowments from the Cave Monastery, where it indicated that:

> "During his life, Gleb together with his princess gave 600 grivna of silver and 50 grivna of gold [to the monastery], and after his death the princess donated 100 grivna of silver and 50 grivna of gold, and after her lifetime the princess left five villages and all her property [to the monastery]".

For these donations and because of her love to the monastery, princess Anastasia was favored, "to be laid in the Pechersk Monastery with the prince in the tomb at the head of St Theodosius"[41]. According to Lebedintsev and Priselkov, it is plausible that the princess also initiated the donation of St Demetrius monastery together with the church of St Peter (founded by her father) to the Cave Monastery[42].

---

39. Maria's husband was presumably also buried in the narthex near his wife in 1106: *PSRL*, vol. II: *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1106, 257. On the location of the tomb, see A. S. PREOBRAŽENSKIJ, *Ktitorskie portrety srednevekovoj Rusi XI-načala XVI veka*, Moscow 2010, 71.

40. Unlike Byzantine private religious foundations, the independent status of the Cave Monastery was not formulated as a *αὐτοδέσποτον*, but the *Kiev-Pechersk Paterik* emphasises strongly its distinction from the princely foundation. On the status of Byzantine monasteries, see J. P. THOMAS, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* [DOS 24], Washington, D.C. 1987. According to the *Life* of Theodosius and the *Russian Primary Chronicle*, Theodosius introduced the Stoudite rule of Patriarch Alexios that he received directly from Constantinople: SENYK, *A History of the Church* (as in footnote 7), 259-264. On the legal status of the Cave monastery, see SMOLIČ, *Russkoe monašestvo* (as in footnote 7), 32-38; PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 194-197.

41. *Položena byst' v Pečerskom manastyri. s knjazem v grobe ou svjatago Theodosja ou golovah*: *PSRL*, vol. II, *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1158, 492-493.

42. P. G. LEBEDINCEV, Dmitrievskij monastyr', ustroennyj v Kieve velikim knjazem Izjaslavom Jaroslavičem, ego sud'ba i mestnost', in: *Čtenia v istoričeskom obšestve Nestora-letopisca*, Kiev 1879, book 1, 30; PRISELKOV (*Očerki*, as in footnote 7, 225-226) does not mention the name of "the wife of Gleb Vsevolodič", but it is known that it was Anastasia, daughter of Yaropolk and Kunigunde von Orlamünde, A. V. NAZARENKO, *Drevnjaja Rus'*

Another princess, who in 1109 was buried in the Cave Monastery, was Eupraxia-Adelaide (*ca.* 1070-1109), a daughter of the prince Vsevolod and his wife Anna. The *Russian Primary Chronicle* attests that she had taken her monastic vows three years earlier (1106)[43]. Eupraxia, who after her marriage took the name Adelaide or Adelheid, returned to Rus' after her unlucky second marriage with the famous king "of Germans" Henry IV (1050-1106)[44]. According to Priselkov, the idea to bury her in the Cave Monastery in Kiev originated from her brother, prince Vladimir Monomah (1053-1125), who also founded a chapel (*božnicu*) above her tomb in the Cave monastery ("to the south, near the doors")[45]. Since she had been converted to the Latin rite during her marriage to the Western ruler, Vladimir Monomah made allegedly some donations to the monastery, in order to convince the monks[46]. It is not clear why she was not buried in the Andreevskij monastery, where her sister Anna/ Janka (Vsevolod's daughter from the first wife Maria) was apparently an abbess. Her mother, Vsevolod's second wife Anna, who died two years later in 1111,

---

i slavjane, Moscow 2007, 153-154. Together with her husband buried by Theodosius she was also mentioned in the book of Kal'nofojskij "Teraturgema" (1638). SHCHAPOV, *State and Church* (as in footnote 7), 158-159 argued that "by 1128 neither Yaropolk nor his brother Mstislav had any heirs left ... That was why Anastasia Yaropolkovna's bequest of all her estates and properties to the Caves monks might have been considered as title to the escheated St Peter's Church linked through one and the same monastery to the Church of St Demetrius". The chronicler regarded it as "doing wrong and committing a grave sin", because there was still a daughter of the third brother Sviatopolk, Anna, wife of Svjatoslav Davydovič of Chernigov, who still retained rights to their family foundation, monastery of St Demetrius.

43. *V se že leto postriženia Eoupraksi Vsevoloža dshi meseca dekabria v 6 den'*: *PSRL*, vol. II, *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1106, 257-258.

44. *Annales Stadenses auctore Alberto*, ed. J. M. LAPPENBERG, MGH, *SS*, Hannover 1859, 271-378; H. Rüss, Eupraxia–Adelheid. Eine biographische Annäherung, *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 54 (2006), 481-518.

45. *Pristavisja Evpraksii Vsevoloža dshi...i položeno byst' telo eja v Pečer'skom manastyri ou dverii jaže k jugu. i včiniša na neju božnicu, ideže ležit telo eja: PSRL*, vol. II, *Ipatjevskaja Letopis'* (as in footnote 18), 1109, 260.

46. PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 314 assumed that Eupraxia had no chance of being buried in St Sophia of Kiev or in the Church of the Tithes, due to her "Latin reputation" and that only her brother's political influence and his rich donations obliged the monks of the Cave monastery to agree to put her tomb there. On the relations between the rulers and the Cave monastery in this connection, see also: PREOBRAŽENSKIJ, *Ktitorskij portret* (as in footnote 38), 71.

and certainly her sister Anna/Janka herself (1112) were buried in their family foundation, i.e. the Andreevskij Monastery. That Vladimir Monomah had to pressure the monks of the Cave monastery to bury his sister-nun there, does not seem completely convincing even to Priselkov himself, who could not find any reason for her not being buried in the Vydubickij monastery, foundation of their father Vsevolod[47]. Vladimir Monomach's own children Euphemia and Yurii Dolgorukij were buried in Savior's (Spasskij) monastery. Moreover, his other daughter from his marriage to Gytha (daughter of Harold II of England), Maria (Marica), took her monastic vows after her husband's death (Byzantine Leo Pseudo-Diogenes) probably in the same Savior's (Spasskij) monastery; after her death in January 1147 she was buried there[48]. Thus, in Eupraxia's case the most convincing explanation would be that it was the dying wish of the princess-nun that she be buried in the most dignified monastic complex and not in any family institution. The fact that her request was honored and that she received a burial place as well as a chapel indicates that she most probably had close contacts to the abbot or the monks.

These examples of women who were buried in the Cave monastery indicate that in the eleventh to twelfth century abbots and monks were in contact with laywomen. St Antony could always count on princess Gertrude's support; Theodosius received visits by his mother whereas he guided spiritually women. The influence of women in ecclesiastical affairs also remained very strong. The same *Kiev-Pechersk Paterik* mentions the case of the princess widow Verhuslava[49], daughter of the Grand Prince Vsevolod III (died 1212), wife and later widow of the prince Rostislav Rurikovič (died 1218). She contacted the bishop of Suzdal Simon with the request that a bishop's seat should be given to the monk Polikarp (from the Cave monastery). Verhuslava even wanted to

47. PRISELKOV, *Očerki* (as in footnote 7), 314.

48. *Toe že zimy prestavisja blagovernaja knjagini Marica. dshi Volodimera...A v ponedelnik vložena byst v grobe v svoei cerkvi v neiže i postriženja: Polnoe sobranie russkih letopisej* (= *PSRL*), vol. I, *Lavrentjevskaja Letopis'*, Moscow 1962, 1146, 314-315; SHCHAPOV, *State and Church* (as in footnote 7), 162; MOROZOVA, *Velikie i neizvestnye* ženšiny (as in footnote 17), 308.

49. On Verhuslava, see D. MORDOVCEV, *Russkie istoričeskie* ženšiny, Sankt Petersburg 1902, also electronically: https://books.google.ru/books?id=2fRhBQAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=ru#v=onepage&q&f=false); A. KARPOV, *Verhuslava Vsevolodovna. Istorija: Ljudi drevnej Rusi. IX–XIII vv.*, published online in: http://www.portal-slovo.ru/history/39105.php.

pay "1000 *[grivna(?)]* of silver" in order to achieve her goal. The cleric rebuked the princess for proposing something not pleasing to God, neither because her request was against the church canons nor because it was made by a woman, but due to the danger it posed to the monk's soul. Simon considered Polikarp not qualified for the office of a bishop; instead, he should remain in the monastery serving the abbot and his fraternity[50].

The monks of the Cave monastery allowed some women who were especially attached to the monastery or/and contributed to the prosperity of the community to find their eternal peace in the sacred space of the monastic complex. In this case, women were not excluded from the monastery's life despite their gender. The ascetic and pious reputation of the monastery made it more attractive for religious women than the princely foundations, especially as a place for burial and eternal commemoration.

The connection between aristocratic women and male monastic ascetic communities as well as female burials in the Cave monastery in Kiev can find some parallels in the Western Latin tradition. For example, one of the most powerful male monastic centers of Middle Ages –the Abbey of Cluny in Burgundy– attracted numerous women as donors, nuns, and founders, who were in contact with abbots and monks, provided rich donations, supported the monastery, lived by the abbey and went on to found nunneries and female communities in the vicinity of Cluny. Pious mothers and sisters of famous monks guaranteed the family memory, cared for the commemoration of the deceased monks and members of the family, and established some kind of direct connection between monasticism and society[51]. This differed from Byzantine

50. PODSKALSKY, *Christentum und theologische Literatur* (as in footnote 7), 164 commented on this fragment as follows: "Das Streben nach der Abtwürde des Dmitrijklosters entsprach nur dem unbändigen Ehrgeiz, nicht dem Willen Gottes, wie Polikarp es generell nicht ertrage, wenn seinen Wünschen nicht stattgeben werde. Auch ein einzelner Erfolg rechtfertigte keinen Hochmut. Darum musste auch der gelenkte, an Simonie grenzende Vorstoß der Prinzessin Verchoslava Rostislavova, Polikarp für verschiedene Bischofssitze (Novgorod, Smolensk oder Jurjev) in Vorschlag zu bringen, abgelehnt werden; der mangelnde Gehorsam und die fehlende Ausgeglichenheit verbieten für Polikarp sowohl das Priester- wie das Bischofsamt". The second letter of Simon to this princess (widow and nun) was also published by A. I. SOBOLEVSKIJ, Poslanie episkopa Simona, *Izvestija otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti* 14 (1909), 1, 3-9.

51. See *La place et le rôle des femmes dans l'histoire de Cluny. En hommage à Ermengarde de Blesle mère de Guillaume le Pieux. Actes du colloque de Blesle des 23 et 24 avril 2010*, ed.

religious practices where ascetic monasticism insisted on gender distinction, especially in the male communities such as Mount Athos or a later monastic complex in Meteora. The *Typikon* of St Athanasios the Meteorite (fourteenth century) for the monastery of the Transfiguration (Metamorphosis) prescribed not to let "a woman pass beyond the prescribed boundary. She should not be given anything to eat, even if she happens to be dying of hunger"[52].

It seems that in Old Rus' the support from the female members of the ruling family was more important for the monks than the gender segregation or the Latin origin of the patroness. The importance of a burial place in prominent monasteries was also connected with the idea of eternal commemoration by the monks and special proximity to sanctity even after death. This could also have been a reason for the decision of the most famous Old Russian nun Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija of Polock (1101 or 1105-1173) to undertake a hard and dangerous pilgrimage to the Holy Land despite her old age: she wanted to follow the Saviour's way and to pass away in Jerusalem. As an old abbess and female founder she presumably hoped to be buried in the Lavra of St Sabas[53]. But her plans were to fail due to the aforementioned differences in monastic rules and traditions of the Byzantine world.

---

by J.-P. RENARD, D. RICHE and J. TEYSSOT, Paris 2013. On female monasticism prior to the time of the orders as well as Western royal female founders, see J. GERSHOW, K. BODARWE, S. MARTI and H. RÖCKELE, Early Monasteries and Foundations (500-1200): An Introduction, in: *Crown and Veil. Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Century*, ed. by J. F. HAMBURGER and C.W. BYNUM, New York 2008, 13-41.

52. *Κανονικὸς Τύπος* (ed. N. Bees, Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τῶν μονῶν τῶν Μετεώρων, *Βυζαντὶς* 1, 1909), 191-331 text: 251-252; Engl. transl. by G. DENNIS, Meteora: Canonical Rule of Athanasios the Meteorite for the Monastery of the Transfiguration (Metamorphosis), in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 53, 1455-1461), here at 1460. On the *abaton* in Byzantine monasteries, see A.-M. TALBOT, Women and Mt Athos, in: *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March 1994*, ed. by A. BRYER and M. CUNNINGHAM [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 4], Aldershot–Hampshire 1996, 67-81 (=EADEM, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, IV).

53. M. DUBROVSKIJ, Žitie *prepodobnoj Evfrosinii Polockoj*, Polock 1877; A. SAPUNOV, Žitie *Evfrosinii Polockoj*, Vitebsk 1888; K. S. SERBINOVIČ, *Istoričeskie svedenija o žizni prepodobnoj Evfrosinii, knjažni Polockoj*, Sankt Petersburg, 1841. On the hagiographical features of the *Life* of Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija of Polock, see PODSKALSKY, *Christentum und theologische Literatur* (as in footnote 7), 144; FERRO, *Santità e agiografia* (as in footnote 14), 153-154, 179-187.

The blessed Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija expected to die in Jerusalem. According to her *Life*, sometime after her arrival she started searching for a burial place. Early enough, she sent her people to the most prestigious ascetic male monastic foundation, the Holy Lavra of St Sabas[54], saying: "The time is near when God makes me repose. Would you allow me to be buried in the Church of St Sabas?" The monks, however, replied that "It is forbidden by St Sabas to admit any women. But there is the monastery of the Holy Mother of God of Theodosius the mutual one, where holy women repose: the mother of St Sabas, the mother of St Theodosius, and the mother of Sts Cosmas and Damian named Pheodotia, and also many other saints; there you should lie"[55]. This episode seems to be historically reliable. The Lavra of St Sabas had very strict rules against eunuchs, youths, and women. The *Typikon* of the monastery denied any access to women to the entire monastic complex, even for prayer (*abaton*). Moreover, it was forbidden for the monks to visit female monasteries for any reason, or keep correspondence to a woman, or have any relationship with women (even spiritual relationships, such as hearing confessions, were forbidden) under threat of expulsion from the brotherhood[56]. Certainly it was not a unique initiative of the monastic community of St Sabas. The *Novella* 133 of Justinian prohibited women from being buried in male monasteries[57]. This

54. On St Sabas and his monastic community in Palestine, see J. PATRICH, *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism: A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticism*, Washington, D.C. 1995; IDEM, *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, Leuven 2001; A. EHRHARD, Das griechische Kloster Mâr-Saba in Palästina: seine Geschichte und seine literarischen Denkmäler, *Römische Quartalschrift* 7 (1893), 32-79; J. LEROY, *Moines et monastères de Proche-Orient*, Paris 1958, 95-106.

55. This monastery is mentioned also in a gendered description of Jerusalem in Vidin miscellany (Bdinski Sbornik, 1360), *Ghent Slavonic Ms 408, ff. 240*, ed. J. L. SCHARPE and F. VYNCKE, *Bdinski Sbornik. An Old-Slavonic Menologium of Women Saints (Ghent University Library Ms. 408, A.D. 1360)*, Bruges 1973. On this episode and the context, see T. LEBER (BELYAKOVA), The Role and Image of the Holy Land in Accounts of Medieval Female Pilgrims, *Croatica Christiana Periodica* 75 (2015), 1-15.

56. E. KURTZ, Τύπος καὶ παράδοσις καὶ νόμος τῆς σεβασμίας λαύρας τοῦ [ἁγίου] Σάββα, *BZ* 3 (1894), 168-170, esp. 168-169; Engl. transl. by G. FIACCADORI, Sabas: Founder's Typikon of the Sabas Monastery near Jerusalem, in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 42, 1311-1318, here at 1316.

57. Justinian, *Novellae*, CXXXIII, ed. R. SCHÖLL and G. KROLL, *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, vol. III, Berlin ⁷1959. This regulation was also included in the Old Russian copy of Nomokanon (Kormčaja)-Novgorod Synodal Kormčaja. On the history of Justinian's Novel 133 in Russian canon law tradition, see E. V. BELYAKOVA, "Toj že Vasilij Ioannu" ili skol'ko sušestvuet

prohibition appears as well in a Serbian charter of the Drenča monastery dated to the fourteenth century ("no woman may be buried in the male monastery with the exception of Serbian empresses and patronesses")[58].

Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija died in the Russian monastery of the Mother of God; she was probably buried in the monastery of St Theodosius in Jerusalem[59] that was supposedly a double monastery, according to the fragment discussed above. This monastery probably had a special significance for the female pilgrims to the Holy Land, because it is also mentioned in the gendered description of Jerusalem from the Bulgarian medieval miscellany *Bdinskij Sbornik* (Vidin mischellany)[60]. After the Ayyubid invasion of Jerusalem, Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija's relics were taken back to Rus' in 1187, and laid to the male Cave monastery in Kiev[61].

The episode about her attempt to be buried in St Sabas Lavra in the Holy Land is extremely interesting since the princess-nun Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija herself was a foundress of two monasteries (one male and one female) in Sel'ce (near Polock). In her nunnery dedicated to St Saviour (today Spaso-Evfimievskii monastery in Polock) she became abbess and attracted some of her female relatives: her sister Gordislava, her nieces as well as her cousin Zvenislava, who became an abbess of the convent after Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija[62]. During the latest restoration in the Spaso-Efrosinievskij monastery in Polock, a portrait of

---

slavjanskih redakcij 133-j novelly Justiniana, in: *Religii mira. Istorija i sovremennost' (2006–2010)*, Sankt Petersburg 2012, 76-89. On the reception of the Novels, see EADEM, K voprosu o sud'be Sobranija Novell Justiniana v 93 glavah v sostave slavjanskih kormčih, *Russica Romana* 17 (2010), 33-43.

58. *Da ne pogrebaet se vnutre crkve ili vnoutr'monastira nikoja* žena *krome carice ili ktitorice*. See S. NOVAKOVIĆ, *Zakonski spomenici srpskih država srednjega veka*, Belgrade 1912, 763. On the history of the monastery, see I. ZDRAVKOVIĆ, Manastir Drenča-Dušmanica, *Starinar* II (1951), 245-248; G. Tošić and D. BULIĆ, Prilog proučavanju manastira Drenča, *Glasnik Društva konzervatora Srbije* 27 (2003), 74-76; T. STARODUBCEV, Pisani izvori o crkvama i manastirama podizanim ili obnavljenim u oblastima Lazarevića i Brankovića. II Povelje, *Saopštenja* 46 (2014), 107-123, here: 110-111.

59. On the monastery of St Theodosius, see Y. HIRSCHFELD, *The Judean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period*, New Haven–London 1992.

60. *Ghent Slavonic Ms 408, ff. 240* (as in footnote 54).

61. In the beginning of the twentieth century they were brought to her foundation in Polotsk, see *Perenesenie svjatih mošej prepodobnoj Evfrosinii iz Kieva v Polock*, Vilnius 1910.

62. On Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija's *Life* and the development of her cult, see the study by FERRO, *Santità e agiografia* (as in footnote 14), 179-187 with the most recent bibliography.

Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija holding a model of her church in her hands was found in the narthex of the main church. This portrait is one of the rarest examples of pre-Mongolian founders' portraits of a female monastic patron. Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija is depicted in monastic attire; the model of her religious foundation is presented as a donation to Christ –the heavenly patron of the monastery in Polotsk. The portrait in the narthex was painted after the foundress' death, later than most frescoes in the monastery. At the same time, it was not part of her mausoleum, because Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija had not planned to be buried in her endowment. In this sense, the portrait of the foundress (although without a nimbus) could have been part of the canonization process, as a step to the cult of the female monastic founder. The location of the fresco could have been connected with Eufrosinija's private chapel in the monastery[63]. Certainly she could easily have been buried in her own foundation, but her striving for *imitatio Christi* brought her to Jerusalem during the Crusaders' rule of king Amalric of Jerusalem (r. 1163-1174).

A. A. Mel'nikov explained Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija's intention to be buried in St Sabas monastery and not in her own pious foundation near Polock as an effort to follow the model of her holy patron Euphrosyne of Alexandria[64], who spent her ascetic life dressed as a man and was buried in a male monastery[65]. I consider this interpretation to be a little exaggerated, because Euphrosyne/Eufrosinija did not want to become member of a male monastic community, to live or to pray in a male monastery. For her it was important to be buried in a "prestigious" sacred space, where she could also achieve incessant commemoration from the praying monks. She was probably more inspired by another female saint of Late Antiquity, the Empress Helena (*ca.* 250-*ca.* 330), and her legendary discovery of the Wood of the True Cross[66]; in 1161, she commissioned a large cross (edged

63. PREOBRAŽENSKIJ, *Ktitorskie portrety* (as in footnote 38), 134-135.

64. A. A. MEL'NIKOV, *„Życie" i życie Eufrasinni, igumenni Polackoj*, Minsk 1995.

65. On the phenomenon of Early Christian female ascetics in male monasteries, see K. BENNASSER, Gender and Sanctity in Early Byzantine Monasticism: A Study of the Phenomenon of Female Ascetics in Male Monastic Habit with a Translation of the Life of Saint Matrona, Ph. D. diss., Rutgers University 1984 (Univ. Microfilms Ann Arbor); A.-M. TALBOT, Female Sanctity in Byzantium, in: EADEM, *Women and Religious Life* (as in footnote 51), VI, 1-16, here at 2-3; É. PATLAGEAN, L'histoire de la femme déguisée en moine et l'évolution de la sainteté féminine à Byzance, *Studi Medievali* 3/17 (1976), 597-623.

66. L. BRUBAKER, Memories of Helena: Patterns in Imperial Female Matronage in the Fourth and Fifth Çenturies, in: *Women, Men and Eunuchs. Gender in Byzantium*, ed. by L. JAMES, London–New York 1997, 52-75.

with gold and silver, with little particles of relics from the True Cross, from the tomb of the Mother of God, etc.) for her religious foundation[67] and went to venerate the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem[68]. Furthermore, in Old Russian monasteries the gender division may have not been so strict as in some Byzantine monasteries[69] or as in the later Russian monastic practice. The thirteenth century saw an increase in the number of female founders of nunneries in medieval Russian cities. Shortly before their death they entered their own convents which were also intended to be mausoleums for them and their female relatives. The idea of private monastic foundations-tombs became more important than the concept of family endowments.

In the period of Muscovite Rus', the idea of dividing male and female space in the church contributed also to the fact that in Moscow Kremlin existed two different churches-mausoleums since the seventeenth century, i.e. the Arhangelskij cathedral for male rulers and the Voznesenskij monastery for their wives and female relatives. The Voznesenskij monastery was founded initially at the end of the fourteenth century by princess Eudokia (nun Euphrosyne/ Eufrosinija, widow of Dmitrij Donskoj). In this sense the Byzantine principle of the gender prescriptions of ἄβατον developed in medieval Russia to the strict rule of separation female and male burial space in the monasteries.

Conclusions

It can be assumed that in Early Russia female monasticism was predominantly aristocratic and fairly limited. Whereas the main function of the male

67. D. I. Dovgiallo, *Krest prepodobnoj Evfrosinii, knjažni Polockoj*, Vitebsk 1895 (see also http://spas-monastery.by/library/books.php?id=1226).

68. A. Jotischky, Holy Fire and Holy Sepulchre: Ritual and Space in Jerusalem from the Ninth to the Fourteenth Centuries, in: *Ritual and Space in the Middle Ages. Proceedings of the 2009 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Fr. Andrews [Harlaxton Medieval Studies 21], Donington 2011, 44-60.

69. Despite numerous prescriptions against "double monasteries", such institutions existed in Constantinople throughout Byzantine history; they were especially popular as aristocratic family foundations during the Palaiologan era, such as the Christ-Saviour Monastery founded by Eirene for her parents, see E. Mitsiou, Frauen als Gründerinnen von Doppelklöstern im byzantinischen Reich, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 2), 333-343. J. Pargoire, Les monastères doubles chez les Byzantins, *ÉO* (1906), 21-25. On the classification of monastic communities, see A.-M. Talbot, A Comparison of the Monastic Experience of Byzantine Men and Women, *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 20 (1985), 1-20 (= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life*, as in footnote 51, XII).

monasteries was constant worship according to the strict regulations, female monastic communities were restricted in their sacramental life since they needed the presence of male priests. Moreover, nunneries were located only in cities. Due to these two factors, they were also more dependent on the local bishops. This limited liturgical and ascetic character of medieval Russian convents would explain why the pious women and aristocratic nuns themselves preferred to be buried in the male monasteries close to revered hermits.

WOMEN, LITERACY AND ART

Antonio Rigo*

La direction spirituelle des moniales à Byzance (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècles)

Le titre de mon article est dans une certaine mesure la reprise volontaire d'une expression du Père Vitalien Laurent, qui après avoir été le premier à découvrir les ouvrages de Théolepte de Philadelphie pour sa fille spirituelle Irène-Eulogie Choumnaina, donnait à un autre article consacré à des thèmes similaires le titre que voici: "La direction spirituelle des grandes dames à Byzance". Le dossier que je vais présenter dans sa totalité selon l'ordre chronologique couvre exactement l'époque paléologue tout entière et consiste en une série de textes, différents par l'extension, les dimensions, la forme et la qualité, adressés par des pères spirituels à des moniales, qui en effet étaient, par leur naissance, de grandes dames.

Je commencerai mon exposé avec le moine Marc, actif dans les années 1260[1]. Le même Marc a réuni sa production dans le *Città del Vaticano BAV Chig. gr.* 27, un manuscrit exécuté par différents copistes[2]. Une partie du *corpus* est adressée à la moniale Eulogie, sœur de l'empereur Michel VIII Paléologue. Le manuscrit comprend 239 titres (précédés par un index et suivis par un court épilogue), qu'on peut répartir ainsi :

I. Un long florilège de 216 chapitres (*Ῥήματα κεφαλαιώδη ἐκ τῶν ὁσίων πατέρων ἡμῶν κατὰ ἀλφάβητον συντεθέντα εἰς ὑποθέσεις διαφόρους*, ff. 1^{r}-306^{v}).

---

* Université Ca' Foscari Venezia, Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici (DSU). – J'adresse mes remerciements à Bernard Flusin pour la relecture de l'article.

1. Je reprends ici pour Marc les remarques déjà faites dans: A. Rigo, Principes et canons pour le choix des livres et la lecture dans la littérature spirituelle byzantine, *Bulgaria Mediaevalis* 3 (2012), 171-185, ici 175-176.

2. Sur ce manuscrit, cf. P. Franchi de' Cavalieri, *Codices graeci chisiani et borgiani*, Roma 1927, 44-65; M. Richard, *Florilèges spirituels grecs*, dans: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, Ascétique et Mystique* 5 (1964), 506-507; Ph. Roelli, *Marci monachi opera ascetica. Florilegium et sermones tres* [CCSG 72], Turnhout 2009, XXXIII. Pour Marc et Eulogie Paléologina, v. aussi *PLP* 17083, 21360.

Parmi les auteurs et les textes cités on retrouve le Nouveau Testament, Anastase le Sinaïte, André de Crète, Antiochos, les Apophtegmes, Athanase d'Alexandrie, Barsanuphe, Basile le Grand, Cassien, Diadoque, le Pseudo-Denys, Dorothée, Ephrem, Isaïe, Grégoire de Nazianze, Grégoire de Nysse, Elie l'Ekdikos, Hésychius de Batos, Jean de Karpathos, Jean Chrysostome, Jean Climaque, Isaac le Syrien, Isidore de Péluse, le Pseudo-Macaire, Marc le Moine, Maxime le Confesseur, Nicolas Mystikos, Nicon de la Montagne Noire, Nil/Évagre, Pallade, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien, Thalassius, Théodoret de Cyrrhe, Zosimas.

II. Un deuxième florilège, plus court, en 9 chapitres (*Ῥήματα κεφαλαιώδη ἐκ τῶν θείων γραφῶν ἐκλεχθέντα καὶ συντεθέντα εἰς ὑποθέσεις διαφόρους*), précédé du titre "Traité ascétique adressé aux moines, hommes et femmes, qui désirent plaire à Dieu dans l'hesychia, écrit pour la moniale Eulogie, sœur du très-pieux empereur Michel Paléologue" (*Λόγος ἀσκητικὸς πρὸς ἀποταξαμένους εἴτε ἄνδρας ἤγουν γυναῖκας, καὶ βουλομένους ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ Θεῷ εὐαρεστῆσαι· ἐσχεδιάσθην δὲ πρὸς τὴν μοναχὴν κυρὰν Εὐλογίαν, τὴν αὐταδέλφην τοῦ εὐσεβεστάτου βασιλέως κυροῦ Μιχαὴλ τοῦ Παλαιολόγου*), avec, en tête, un distique iambique qu'on retrouve au début de l'"Anthologion gnomikon" d'Élie l'Ekdikos, et suivi par un épilogue (dans lequel Marc utilise le prologue des "Chapitres sur la charité" de Maxime le Confesseur)[3] et une lettre adressée à Eulogie (ff. 307^{r}-332^{v})[4]. Parmi les auteurs et les textes cités on retrouve le Nouveau Testament, les Apophtegmes, Barsanuphe, Basile le Grand, les Constitutions apostoliques, Diadoque, Dorothée, Éphrem, Isaïe, Grégoire de Nazianze, Grégoire de Nysse, Jean Chrysostome, Jean Climaque, Jean Damascène, Isaac le Syrien, Isidore de Péluse, le Pseudo-Macaire, Marc le Moine, Maxime le Confesseur, Nicolas Mystikos, Nicolas de Corfou, Nicon de la Montagne Noire, Syméon le Nouveau Théologien.

III. "Traité adressé à une âme très-noble" (*Λόγος πρὸς εὐγενεστάτην ψυχήν*)[5], adressé à Eulogie avant son entrée en religion (cf. chap. 14).

---

3. Nous pouvons lire: *Ἰδού, πεπλήρωκα τὴν αἴτησίν σου (...) οὐ γεώργιον ταῦτα τῆς ἐμῆς διανοίας, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν λόγων ἀπό τε τοῦ θείου Εὐαγγελίου ἀπό τε τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων ἀπό τε τῶν σεβασμίων πατέρων ἐρανισάμενος ἀφελῶς καὶ ἰδιωτικῶς ταῦτα συντέθηκα, ὡς κεφαλαιῶδες τὰ πλεῖστα διὰ τὸ εὐσύνοπτον καὶ περιεκτικὸν καὶ εὐμνημόνευτον (...). Ἐμπόνως δὲ ὀφείλεις προσανέχειν ἑκάστῳ τῶν κεφαλαίων*, XLIII: Roelli, *Marci monachi opera ascetica*, 99-100.

4. Roelli, *Marci monachi opera ascetica* (v. ci-dessus note 2), 3-105. Le florilège est copié aussi dans *Paris BnF suppl. gr.* 1277 (XIII^{e} s.), ff. 46^{v}-81^{v}, *Roma Biblioteca Vallicelliana gr.* 67 (E 21) (XIV^{e} s.), ff. 523^{r}-553^{v}, *Città del Vaticano BAV Reg. gr.* 48 (XIV^{e} s.), ff. 1^{r}-8^{v}.

5. Roelli, *Marci monachi opera ascetica* (v. ci-dessus note 2), 107-135.

IV. Une "Diataxis, en résumé, en tant que règle pour l'année entière adressée à un laïc qui désire être sauvé" (*Διάταξις ἐν ἐπιτομῇ ὡς τυπικὸν ὅλου του ἐνιαυτοῦ πρός τινα κοσμικὸν σωθῆναι βουλόμενον*)[6].

V. Un "Règlement tiré des Pères pour les moines et les moniales" (*Ἐκ τῶν θεσπεσίων πατέρων ἡμῶν τυπικὸν πρὸς μονάζοντας καὶ μοναζούσας σπουδάζοντας σωθῆναι*)[7].

Dans la lettre à Eulogie qui accompagne le "Traité ascétique", Marc expose des idées que l'on peut retrouver aussi dans les autres ouvrages (III, IV). Il a composé le traité à la demande d'Eulogie (*κατὰ τὴν σὴν προσταγὴν μικρόν σοι τὸ παρὸν βιβλίον ἐσχεδίασα*)[8]. Le "petit livre" (adjectif sur lequel il insiste) est évidemment le seul n° II, constitué de quelques cahiers, tandis que le n° I occupe plus de 300 folios. L'envoi du n° II à Eulogie explique aussi l'existence de plusieurs copies du traité[9].

J'en viens maintenant à décrire une véritable personnalité, un des protagonistes des événements politiques et ecclésiastiques du dernier quart du XIII^e^ siècle et de la première vingtaine d'années du XIV^e^, Théolepte de Philadelphie[10]. Sa figure de moine et de métropolite a connu à Byzance une grande popularité, pour son ascèse et pour l'exercice de son activité pastorale dans une ville, Philadelphie, constamment menacée par les Turcs. Pendant quinze ans, Théolepte fut le père spirituel de la fille de Nicéphore Choumnos, la jeune Irène-Eulogie, supérieure du monastère constantinopolitain du Philanthropos Soter[11].

Un *corpus* organisé des ouvrages de Théolepte est conservé dans un manuscrit en parchemin (actuel *Città del Vaticano BAV Ottob. gr.* 405) qu'Irène-Eulogie commissionna peu de temps après la mort de son père spirituel[12]. Un témoignage évident est constitué par les notes en marge des lettres de Théolepte et, vraisemblablement, par l'invocation qu'on lit au début du manuscrit : "Oh

---

6. *Ibidem*, 137-156.

7. *Ibidem*, 157-179.

8. Comme le n° III: «*γράφω καθώς περ ἐκέλευσας*»; «*Ἰδού, ὡς ὁρᾷς (...) κατὰ τὴν σὴν αἴτησιν τὸ μικρὸν τοῦτο λόγιον ἐνέχάραξα (...)· σὸν δέ ἐστι λοιπὸν κατὰ τὴν μικρὴν ταύτην ὑπόμνησιν πολιτευθῆναι*»: *ibidem*, 133.

9. Cf. plus haut note 4.

10. Sur Théolepte et ses œuvres, v. la mise à point dans: A. Rigo et A. Stolfi, *Teolepto metropolita di Filadelfia, Lettere e discorsi*, Magnano 2007, 273-281 (bibl.).

11. Pour Irène-Eulogie, cf. *ibidem*, 281-289 (A. Stolfi).

12. Sur le manuscrit, v. en dernier lieu, I. Pérez Martín, Irene Cumno y el 'Taller de la Paleologuina', *Scrittura e civiltà* 19 (1995), 223-234.

Christ, garde la propriétaire <du livre>" (*ὦ Χριστέ μου φύλαττε τὴν κεκτημένην*, f. 2[r]). On connait deux copies de la collection effectuées à l'époque byzantine: la première exécutée déjà pendant la première moitié du XIV[e] siècle, dont seulement un fragment est conservé (*Paris BnF Suppl. gr.* 64, ff. 81[r]-104[v])[13], la deuxième (*El-Iskandariya Bibl. tou Patriarcheiou* 131), vers la fin du siècle par les soins d'un personnage que nous retrouverons dans la suite, Nathanaël, métropolite de Pentapolis[14]. Il faut souligner un fait exceptionnel pour cette littérature: le premier traité de la collection, le "Discours sur l'activité cachée en Christ" (n° I), a connu dès la fin de l'époque byzantine une fortune autonome, sans le prologue adressé à Irène-Eulogie et dans une forme masculinisée et il sera finalement publié dans la "Philocalie" (*Φιλοκαλία*)[15].

Dans la collection des œuvres de Théolepte, ordonnée selon leur date de composition[16], figurent cinq lettres du métropolite, un nombre consistant (17) de catéchèses adressées aux moines et aux moniales du Philanthropos Soter, deux règlements ascétiques adressés à Iréne-Eulogie, quelques traités sur des sujets spirituels adressés à la même Irène ou à des destinataires qui ne sont pas identifiables. Parmi les lettres[17], la première est de 1307, peu de temps après l'entrée d'Irène en religion, tandis que les quatre autres date de la dernière année de vie de Théolepte (fin 1321-1322). Le premier règlement ascétique est

13. Cf. CH. ASTRUC, M.-L. CONCASTY, C. BELLON, CHR. FÖRSTEL et AL., *Catalogue des manuscrits grecs. Supplément grec numéros 1 à 150*, Paris 2003, 146-147.

14. Cf. A. RIGO, Due manoscritti tra Costantinopoli e Alessandria e la lettera di Natanaele metropolita di Pentapolis all' arconte Manuele Theophilos (fine del XIV secolo), dans: *Griechisch-byzantinische Handschriftenforschung. Traditionen, Entwicklungen, neue Wege*, éd. par CHR. BROCKMANN, D. DECKERS, D. HARLFINGER, ST. VALENTE, Berlin-Boston 2019, 511-518.

15. Théolepte, *Λόγος τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ κρυπτὴν ἐργασίαν διασαφῶν καὶ δεικνύων ἐν βραχεῖ τοῦ μοναδικοῦ ἐπαγγέλματος τὸν κόπον*, dans: *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν συνερανισθεῖσα παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων καὶ θεοφόρων πατέρων ἡμῶν ἐν ᾗ διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν καὶ θεωρίαν ἠθικῆς φιλοσοφίας ὁ νοῦς καθαίρεται, φωτίζεται καὶ τελειοῦται καὶ εἰς ἣν προσετέθησαν τὰ ἐκ τῆς Βενετίας ἐκδόσεως ἐλλείποντα κεφάλαια τοῦ μακαρίου Πατριάρχου Καλλίστου*, vol. IV, Athènes [3]1976, 4-12.

16. Pour la datation des ouvrages de Théolepte, cf. les remarques dans: RIGO et STOLFI, *Teolepto metropolita di Filadelfia* (v. ci-dessus note 10), 291-295.

17. Éd. A. CONSTANTINIDES HERO, *The Life and Letters of Theoleptos of Philadelphia* [The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 20], Brookline Mass. 1994.

contemporain de la première lettre (1307)[18], tandis que le deuxième[19] est de la décennie suivante (1317?). Pendant les premiers mois de 1322, peu de temps avant sa mort, le métropolite envoya de Philadelphie son "testament spirituel"[20], un abrégé de ses enseignements à Irène-Eulogie et à la moniale Agathonikè.

La première lettre, adressée à la princesse qui, après la mort de son époux, avait embrassé la vie monastique, contient une série de conseils personnels sur des sujets ascétique et spirituels, tandis que les autres lettres traitent aussi de ses devoirs de supérieure, de la vie du monastère, des rapports entre les moniales, ou de tel cas particulier. Pour cette raison, selon Théolepte, les lettres "sont des instructions communes pour toi et pour les moniales qui sont avec toi" (*τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄνωθεν εἰρημένα κοινὰ παραγγέλματα πρὸς σὲ καὶ τὰς μετὰ σοῦ*)[21]. Il est donc nécessaire qu'Irène (et les autres moniales) lisent et méditent fréquemment les lettres[22]. Les catéchèses/homélies, adressées aux moniales et aux moines (le Philanthropos Soter était un monastère double), sont consacrées à des sujets spirituels et ascétiques, aux dimanches, aux fêtes de l'année, et elles touchent souvent des événements survenus à l'intérieur de la fondation religieuse.

C'est dans une ambiance bien différente que nous sommes conduits par l'épistolaire de la même Irène-Eulogie Choumnaina, contenant sa correspondance avec son "deuxième directeur spirituel" (pour utiliser la définition de Vitalien Laurent reprise par les autres chercheurs). Les lettres, qui remontent au milieu des années 30 (entre 1332 et 1338), sont conservées dans un seul manuscrit, l'actuel *El Escorial Real Biblioteca gr.* Φ. III. 11 (230)[23], ff. 235^{r}-254^{v}, qui

18. *Λόγος τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ κρυπτὴν ἐργασίαν διασαφῶν ὡς ἐν βραχεῖ τοῦ μοναδικοῦ ἐπαγγέλματος τὸν σκοπόν* (éd. R. E. Sinkewicz, *Theoleptos of Philadelpheia: The Monastic Discourses. A Critical Edition, Translation and Study* [Studies and Texts 111], Toronto 1992), 84-108 (n° I).

19. *Ὅτι τὰ κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον καὶ τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν Θάλασσαν γεγενημένα παραδόξως διὰ Μωσέως ἐνεργοῦνται πνευματικῶς ἐν τοῖς ἀγωνιζομένοις κατὰ Χριστόν*: *ibidem*, 154-166 (n° III).

20. *Μερικὴ διατράνωσις πρὸς ὑπόμνησιν ἄγουσα τῶν παρὰ τοῦ ταπεινοῦ Φιλαδελφείας Θεολήπτου διαφόρως λαληθέντων τῇ σεβασμιωτάτῃ βασιλίσσῃ Εὐλογίᾳ μοναχῇ καὶ τῇ μετ'αὐτῆς καὶ ὑπ'αὐτὴν Ἀγαθονικῇ μοναχῇ*: *ibidem*, 352-382 (n° XXIII).

21. Lettre, n° II, éd. Constantinides Hero, *The Life and Letters* (v. ci-dessus note 17), 52.251-252.

22. Lettre, n° III, éd. Constantinides Hero, *The Life and Letters* (v. ci-dessus note 17), 70.12-15.

23. Sur le manuscrit, cf. G. De Andrés, *Catálogo de los códices griegos de la Real Biblioteca de el Escorial*, vol. II, Madrid 1965, 60-64; A. Constantinides Hero, *Letters*

contient des textes médicaux, astronomiques, philosophiques et théologiques. La présence des ouvrages qui proviennent des milieux antipalamites (quatre lettres anépigraphes de Grégoire Akindynos[24], une lettre d'un anonyme ami de Jean Cyparissiotès à Matthieu Cantacuzène[25]) et, surtout, celle de deux discours sans nom d'auteur, mais composés par Théolepte de Philadelphie[26], font croire que le manuscrit était en possession de la même Irène-Eulogie[27]. Les chercheurs ont proposé d'identifier l'anonyme "directeur spirituel" de la princesse avec Ignace l'hésychaste[28], Théoctiste le Studite[29], et, récemment encore avec Grégoire Akindynos[30]. Aucune des identifications proposées n'est acceptable[31].

L'épistolaire est formé de vingt-deux lettres, parmi lesquelles huit sont d'Irène-Eulogie et les autres de son correspondant. Tous deux abordent

---

of Gregory Akindynos [CFHB 21/ DOT 7], Washington, D. C. 1983, XXXVII-XL; EADEM, *A Woman's Quest for Spiritual Guidance: The Correspondence of Princess Irene Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina* [The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 11], Brookline Mass. 1986, 22.

24. CONSTANTINIDES HERO, *Akindynos* (v. ci-dessus note 23), n° 7-9, 13.

25. EADEM, *An Unknown Letter to Matthew Kantakouzenos*, dans: *Okeanos. Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtienth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, éd. par C. MANGO et O. PRITSAK avec l'assistance de U. M. PASICZNYK = *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983), 280-288.

26. I. K. GREGOROPOULOS, *Θεολήπτου Φιλαδελφείας τοῦ Ὁμολογητοῦ (1250-1322). Βίος καὶ ἔργα*, vol. I, Katerini 1996, 247-252, 302-303.

27. CONSTANTINIDES HERO, *Akindynos* (v. ci-dessus note 23), XL et EADEM, *A Woman's Quest* (v. ci-dessus note 23), 22, ne considérait pas que les deux discours sont de Théolepte et elle parlait de l'entourage d'Irène.

28. Ainsi V. LAURENT, La direction spirituelle à Byzance. La correspondance d'Irène-Eulogie Choumnaina avec son second directeur, *RÉB* 14 (1956), 48-86, en part. 64-68; A. CONSTANTINIDES HERO, Irene-Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina, Abbess of the Convent of Philanthropos Soter in Constantinople, *BF* 9 (1985), 119-146, en part. 139-140.

29. Cf. G. A. PAPADEMETRIOU, Ἡ κράλαινα τῶν Τριβαλῶν καὶ ὁ κωδικογράφος Θεόκτιστος (± 1340), *Μεσαιωνικὰ καὶ Νέα Ἑλληνικὰ* 1 (1984), 419-451.

30. Cf. J. NADAL CAÑELLAS, Gregorio Akíndynos, dans: *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. II: *XIII^e-XIX^e s.*, éd. par G. C. CONTICELLO et V. CONTICELLO, Turnhout 2002, 203-205 et aussi IDEM, *La résistance d'Akindynos à Grégoire Palamas. Enquête historique avec traduction et commentaire de quatre traités édités récemment*, vol. II: *Commentaire historique* [Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense. Études et documents 51], Leuven 2006, 28-83.

31. L'hypothèse du Père Nadal est sans doute la plus séduisante, mais je pense qu'à l'époque des lettres Akindynos était trop jeune (30 ans) et qu'il ne pouvait pas être le "directeur" d'Irène.

différents arguments: les ouvrages composés par le "directeur", des questions de style... Ils citent les Apophtegmes, Grégoire de Nazianze (mais aussi Pindare), ils parlent des livres de la bibliothèque du Philanthropos Soter (le "directeur" en demande une liste à Irène), et surtout des obligations sociales de la princesse, de ses liens avec sa famille, du défunt Théolepte de Philadelphie et de l'intention manifestée maintes fois par Irène de rencontrer son correspondant. Au-delà de certains termes utilisés (*ἡ ἁγιωσύνη σου, πάτερ ἅγιε*)[32], les lettres donnent l'impression d'une correspondance entre deux personnes raffinées et unies par une amitié spirituelle et intellectuelle plutôt que par un rapport de direction spirituelle[33]. Dans les lettres, il est impossible de retrouver les éléments, mais aussi les formes et les stylèmes, typiques du genre, que nous retrouvons par contre dans les autres dossiers contemporains. La correspondance est, pour ainsi dire, le témoignage d'une direction spirituelle manquée, ou seulement désirée par Irène-Eulogie, après la mort de Théolepte, et peut-être aussi par son correspondant, indubitablement séduit par la personnalité de la princesse. Les passages dans lesquels on peut retrouver les éléments qui sont habituels dans le genre des textes de direction spirituelle, ou qui donnent au moins l'impression d'évoquer le vocabulaire ascétique, sont tout à fait occasionnels[34]: c'est le cas lorsque le "directeur" rappelle à la princesse le modèle de saintes femmes (*τὰς ἱερὰς γυναῖκας*) qui voyaient les pères spirituels après un long intervalle de plusieurs années[35] ou encore quand il l'invite à rester assise dans la cellule, en s'adonnant à la répétition continuelle du Nom de Jésus dans sa raison purifiée (*καθεζομένη ἐν τῷ κελλίῳ σου μετὰ φόβου καὶ πόθου τῆς ἁγίας Τριάδος καὶ τῇ*

32. Constantinides Hero, *A Woman's Quest* (v. ci-dessus note 23), n° 9, l. 1.

33. Je serais tenté de rapprocher les lettres de celles de Théodora Raoulaina et de ses correspondants, cf. à ce propos A. E. Laiou, The Correspondence of Gregorios Kyprios As a Source for the History of Social and Political Behavior in Byzantium or, On Government by Rhetoric, dans: *Geschichte und Kultur der Palaiologenzeit. Referate des Internationalen Symposiums zu Ehren von Herbert Hunger*, éd. par W. Seibt [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften, Bd. 241. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 8], Vienne 1996, 91-108, ici 91-95 et en dernier lieu, S. Kotzabassi, Scholarly Friendship in the Thirteenth Century: Patriarch Gregorios II Kyprios and Theodora Raoulaina, *Parekbolai* 1 (2011), 115-170.

34. Et aussi quand le "directeur" parle de soi-même, en cherchant à dissuader Irène-Eulogie de faire des visites (*Καθίσας ἐν τῷ κελλίῳ μου καὶ συναγαγὼν ἐμαυτὸν ἔμπροσθεν (...) Θεοῦ*): Constantinides Hero, *A Woman's Quest* (v. ci-dessus note 23), n° 14, ll. 1-3.

35. *Ibidem*, n° 16, ll. 3-14; exemple répété au n° 17, ll. 2-3, 43-54.

καθαρᾷ ἐννοίᾳ καὶ συνεχεῖ τοῦ ἁγίου αὐτοῦ καὶ καθαρτικοῦ τῶν ἐννοούντων ὀνόματος ἁγιάζουσά σου καὶ φωτίζουσα διηνεκῶς τὴν διάνοιαν)[36].

Dans le troisième volume de la collection manuscrite des œuvres complètes de Grégoire Palamas, avec le titre "Livre des traités éthiques et didascaliques" (τῶν ἠθικῶν τε καὶ διδασκαλικῶν λόγων), figure, avec les homélies, la *Vie* de Pierre l'Athonite, le petit corpus des écrits de la captivité, les lettres à Jean et Théodore et à Paul Asen, le court traité intitulé "À la très vénérable moniale Xéné, sur les passions, les vertus et les fruits du repos de l'intellect" (Πρὸς τὴν σεμνοτάτην ἐν μοναζούσαις Ξένην περὶ παθῶν καὶ ἀρετῶν καὶ τῶν τικτομένων ἐκ τῆς κατὰ νοῦν σχολῆς)[37]. L'ouvrage, entier ou en extrait, a connu une diffusion considérable (une vingtaine de manuscrits). Il est possible de le rapprocher pour la forme d'autres compositions de Grégoire, comme le traité épistolaire (Λόγος ἐπιστολιμαῖος) adressé aux philosophes Jean et Théodore[38] et la lettre à l'hiéromoine Paul Asen sur le grand habit[39]. Grégoire a écrit en réponse à une requête de la moniale Xéné[40] entre 1346 et le début de 1347[41]. La destinataire,

36. *Ibidem*, n° 16, ll. 43-52.

37. Éd. P. K. CHRÊSTOU, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. V, Thessaloniki 1992, 193-230; liste des manuscrits: *ibidem*, 153-154. Il faut ajouter au moins *Athos Dionysiou* 275 (3809) (XVII[e] s.), *Skiathos Monê tou Evaggelismou* 10 (XVIII[e] s.), *Athos Koutl.* 199 (554) (a. 1833), *Iasi Mitropolia Moldovei şi Sucevei gr.* 39 (XVIII[e] s.).

38. *Ibidem*, 231-246.

39. *Ibidem*, 247-250.

40. "Tu (...) <as> réussi avec tes prières (δεομένη), avec tes lettres d'incitation et avec tes messages (παρακλητικοῖς γράμμασι [...] καὶ μηνύμασιν), quoique tu n'aies pas besoin d'exhortations (παραινέσεων)": *ibidem*, 195.20-23.

41. Des passages renvoie évidemment à la guerre civile et à une situation antérieure à la déposition de Jean XIV Calécas (entre 1341 et 1347). Les passages de l'ouvrage parallèles avec d'autres écrits de Grégoire nous montrent que la lettre à Xéné constitue une dernière réécriture, postérieure aussi au VII[e] *Antirrhétique contre Grégoire Akindynos* (1345/6) (cf. A. RIGO, *De l'apologie à l'évocation de l'expérience mystique. Évagre le Pontique, Isaac le Syrien et Diadoque de Photicé dans les œuvres de Grégoire Palamas (et dans la controverse palamite)*, dans: *Knotenpunkt Byzanz. Wissensformen und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen*, éd. A. SPEER et PH. STEINKRÜGER [Miscellanea Mediaevalia 36], Berlin–New York 2011, 85-110, en part. 90. Pour cette raison je date le traité de la période entre 1346 et les débuts de 1347. D'habitude on fixe une chronologie antérieure, 1345/6, cf. J. MEYENDORFF, *Introduction à l'étude de Grégoire Palamas* [Patristica Sorbonensia 3], Paris 1959, 385-386; *PLP* 21546; R. E. SINKEWICZ, *Gregory Palamas*, dans: *La théologie byzantine* (v. ci-dessus note 30), vol. II, 152,

qui ne semble pas identifiable avec une des religieuses homonymes connues[42], est une vieille moniale qui a passé beaucoup d'années au monastère[43]. Le "filles du grand empereur" (*θυγατέρας τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως*)[44], encore jeunes (*αἱ κατὰ Θεὸν προῃρημέναι ζῆν νεάνιδες*) sont sous sa direction[45]. Le souverain mentionné est évidemment Andronic III Paléologue (†1341). Je crois qu'on peut identifier les jeunes moniales avec les deux filles illégitimes, veuves très tôt et de retour à Constantinople en 1341, Iréne[46] et "Bayâlûn"[47]. Les moniales vivaient vraisemblablement dans un monastère de la capitale impériale.

Grégoire Palamas compose donc l'ouvrage à la demande de Xéné, ou mieux pour l'édification et l'utilité spirituelle des jeunes moniales. Le traité est ouvert par un court prologue suivi par 21 chapitres[48]. La première partie (n° 1-12) parle de la vie véritable du corps et de l'âme, de la virginité monastique et de la pauvreté de l'esprit, tandis que la deuxième (n° 13-21), dont le contenu est bien illustré par le titre général du traité, est consacrée aux passions principales, aux tentations, à l'affliction (*πένθος*), au repos de l'intellect et à la contemplation de la lumière divine. Dans cette deuxième partie Grégoire reprend ce qu'il avait écrit ailleurs, à partir de la *Vie* de Pierre l'Athonite, et en particulier dans le traité épistolaire à Jean et Théodore[49]. Seule une petite partie de cet écrit semble être dédiée spécialement et expressément au cas concret de Xéné et de ses subordonnées. C'est seulement dans la première partie qu'il est possible de rencontrer des passages qu'on peut rapporter à sa destinataire et à la réalité

---

tandis que l'éditeur (CHRÊSTOU, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. V, 137-138) parlent d'une date plus ancienne: 1342 (εἰς τὴν ἄνοιξιν τοῦ 1342)!

42. *PLP* 20845; cfr. 8282, 10944, 20846, 29746, 91876. L'hypothèse de l'éditeur du traité (CHRÊSTOU, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. V, 137-138) n'est soutenue par aucune preuve: ils affirment que Xéné était une disciple de Marie Rite († 1333), veuve de Michel IX Paléologue, en religion la moniale Xéné (*PLP* 21394).

43. Cf. CHRÊSTOU, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. V, 195.23-26, 196.17.

44. *Ibidem*, 196.7-8.

45. *Ibidem*, 196.18.

46. *PLP* 12061.

47. Cf. *PLP* 21158.

48. La division en chapitres, avec le titre, est présente dans tous les manuscrits. Sans raison, l'éditeur des œuvres de Grégoire Palamas la placent dans l'apparat critique, en se basant évidemment sur le seul manuscrit qui l'omet, l'*Athos Lavra* Ω 95 (1907), ff. 201^{r}-216^{v} et sur l'édition de la *Philocalie*.

49. Cf. RIGO, *De l'apologie à l'évocation de l'expérience mystique* (v. ci-dessus note 41), 90-93.

féminine. En effet, après avoir exposé la doctrine des passions principales (pour lesquelles il propose la tripartition traditionnelle)[50], Grégoire recommande: "La vierge doit fuir les parents selon la chair" (n° 11). Nous trouvons des recommandations semblables dans les autres ouvrages envoyés aux moniales par les pères spirituels.

Jacques métropolite de Chalcédoine[51] de 1351 à 1370 est un personnage relativement bien connu en raison de sa participation aux travaux du Synode de Constantinople et de sa présence au concile palamite de 1351. Dans le manuscrit *Paris BnF gr.* 1372, ff. 155^{r}-170^{v}, est conservée, sans nom de l'auteur, une collection de lettres sous le long titre: "Admonitions et exhortations du très saint métropolite de Chalcédoine, mon père spirituel dans le Saint-Esprit. Il me les a écrites de manières diverses en fonction des dispositions spirituelles, pour l'utilité de mon âme misérable. Mes questions et ses réponses sur l'état et la faiblesse du corps ainsi que de l'âme. Ceux qui par la grâce du Saint-Esprit les liront n'en tireront pas peu de profit" (*Νουθεσίαι καὶ παραινέσεις τοῦ ἁγιωτάτου μητροπολίτου Χαλκηδόνος, καὶ ἐν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι πνευματικοῦ μου πατρός, διαφόρως γραφεῖσαι πρός με, ὡς ἀπὸ διαθέσεως πνευματικῆς, εἰς ὠφέλειαν τῆς ἐλεινῆς μου ψυχῆς· καὶ ἐρωτήσεις παρ'ἐμοῦ καὶ ἀπολογίαι πρὸς τὴν κατάστασιν καὶ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς ψυχῆς ὁμοῦ καὶ τοῦ σώματος· καὶ οἱ ἐντυγχάνοντες ταύτας διὰ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ οὐ μικρᾶς ὠφελείας τεύξονται*). Ici sa fille spirituelle Eulogie a recueilli une série de quatorze lettres (mais à l'origine, la collection comprenait une ou deux pièces de plus) de direction spirituelle du métropolite de Chalcédoine, écrites pendant les années 1350-1360. La destinataire des lettres du métropolite de Chalcédoine n'est pas connue. Selon le titre que nous venons de lire le recueil devait comprendre aussi les lettres d'Eulogie, dont il

50. Cf. Évagre le Pontique, *Περὶ λογισμῶν* 1, éd. A. GUILLAUMONT, CL. GUILLAUMONT et P. GÉHIN, *Évagre le Pontique, Sur les pensées* [SC 438], Paris 1998, 148-152; Jean Climaque, *Λόγος* 26: *Περὶ διακρίσεως λογισμῶν, καὶ παθῶν, καὶ ἀρετῶν*, *PG* 88, col. 1013A-1036C, en part. 1013A; Maxime le Confesseur, *Τῶν περὶ ἀγάπης κεφαλαίων*, III, 56, dans: *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν* (v. ci-dessus, note 15), vol. II, Athènes 1975, 35; Grégoire le Sinaïte, *Κεφάλαια δι'ἀκροστιχίδος πάνυ ὠφέλιμα*, 91-115 en part. 91, dans: *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν* (v. ci-dessus, note 15), vol. IV, 45-62, en part. 45.

51. Cf. A. RIGO, Le lettere di Giacomo metropolita di Calcedonia alla monaca Eulogia (anni 50-60 del XIV secolo), *Bulgaria Mediaevalis* 4/5 (2013/14) = *Studies in Honour of Professor Vassilka Tăpkova-Zaimova*, 195-201; IDEM, *Mistici bizantini*, Torino 2008, 595-604.

n'y a aucune trace dans le manuscrit. Jacques écrivait à Eulogie que ses lettres devaient être sa règle et son canon (*ὡς τύπον τινα καὶ κανόνα*) (Lettre n° XI; et cf. aussi n° XIII). Eulogie a évidemment accueilli l'invitation de son père spirituel et a rassemblé ses lettres sous un titre qu'en souligne l'utilité spirituelle pour les lecteurs successifs.

Vers 1390, pendant son séjour à Constantinople, où il était arrivé avec une ambassade des Mamelouks d'Egypte, Nathanaël, métropolite de Pentapolis (Libye)[52] écrivait une lettre de direction spirituelle à la moniale Eugénie, *Ὁ ταπεινὸς μητροπολίτης Πενταπόλεως Ναθαναὴλ τῇ εὐλαβεστάτῃ ἐν μοναχαῖς καὶ ἐν ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι θυγατρὶ τῆς ἡμῶν ταπεινότητος Εὐγενίᾳ μοναχῇ ἐν Κυρίῳ χαίρειν*, qui est conservée par sept manuscrits tardifs: *Athina EBE* 332 (XVI^e^ s.), *Patmos Monê Ioannou tou Theologou* 379 (XVI^e^ s.), *Athos Dionysiou* 132 (3666) (fin XVI^e^-début XVII^e^ s.), *Athos Xèropotamou* 140 (2702) (XVII^e^ s.), *Athos Karakallou* 87 (1600) (XVIII^e^ s.), *Athos Lavra* Λ 197 (1688) (XVIII^e^ s.), *Samos Bibliothêkê tês Mêtropoleos* 66 (XVIII^e^ s.), *Athos Iviron* 373 (4493) (a. 1707)[53]. La destinataire, la moniale Eugénie, est inconnue. La lettre est composée de 15 courts chapitres précédés par un prologue. Nous apprenons que Nathanaël écrivait à la suite d'une requête d'Eugènie qui lui avait demandé une règle (*στάθμη, ὑποτύπωσις*) et un canon (*κανών*).

En dernier lieu, et pour cause, je parlerai d'un auteur et d'un ouvrage qu'on date des environs de 1200, mais qui sont en réalité de la deuxième moitié du XIV^e^ siècle : le «Livre II» de l'abba Isaïe[54].

L'œuvre, dont le texte grec est inédit mais qui est devenue relativement populaire à l'époque moderne avec la traduction russe faite au XIX^e^ siècle par Théophane (Govorov) le Reclus[55], pendant un voyage en Palestine, sur la base

52. Sur Nathanaël, cf. A. Rigo, Il metropolita di Pentapolis Natanaele a Costantinopoli (fine del XIV secolo), dans: *Γαληνοτάτη. Τιμή στη Χρύσα Μαλτέζου*, Athènes 2013, 697-707; Idem, Due manoscritti tra Costantinopoli e Alessandria, (v. ci-dessus, note 14).

53. Nous publierons l'édition du texte dans un volume consacré à la direction spirituelle des moniales à l'époque paléologue.

54. Cf. déjà Rigo, *Mistici bizantini*, 607-615; Idem, Principes et canons pour le choix des livres (v. ci-dessus, note 1), 176-178; nous étudions l'ouvrage dans le livre dont nous parlons dans la note précedente.

55. Miterikon. Sobranie nastavlenij avvy Isaii vsečestnoj inokine Feodore, *Voskresnoe Čtenie* 1853-9, et après Moscou 1891, ²1898, ³1908 (add. des chapitres 204-403), réimpression de cette dernière édition, Sankt Peterburg 1996; trad. it. par A. Sivak, *Meterikon. I detti*

d'un manuscrit (actuel *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243) en possession de l'évêque Porfirij Uspenskij[56], avait déjà connu deux éditions aux XIV^e^-XV^e^ siècles.

Les sept manuscrits connus se divisent en deux groupes. Le premier (t), qui conserve la rédaction primitive du texte, commence avec les mots *Βίβλος καλλίστη μοναχῆς Ἀγγελίνας* et est représenté par un seul témoin, l'actuel *Athos Pantel.* 578 (6085) (**P**)[57], copié pour l'ex-higoumène du monastère athonite du Pantokrator en 1689[58]. Le livre, était donc adressé originellement par un certain moine Isaïe à la moniale Théodora Angelina. Dans le deuxième groupe (e), l'ouvrage est intitulé *Βίβλος καλλίστη Ἑλένης Κατελούσενας κυρᾶς μεγάλης Αἴνου*. Le groupe est constitué par les manuscrits suivants : *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243 (**H**), exécuté en 1449/50 par le moine Méthode du monastère τῶν Ὁδηγῶν à Constantinople[59]; *Athos Xenoph.* 34 (736) (XV^e^ s.)[60]; *Lesbos Monê Hagiou Ioannou tou Theologou* 9 (XV^e^ s.)[61]; *Athos Iviron* 532 (4652)

---

della madri del deserto, éd. par L. Coco, Milano 2002; trad. allemande M. Bagin, A.-A. Thiermeyer, *Meterikon. Die Weisheit der Wüstenmütter*, Augsburg 2004. Pour la traduction de Théophane, cf. aussi G. Tertyšnikov, Bogoslovskoe nasledie episcopa Feofana Zatvornika, *Bogoslovskie Trudy* 16 (1976), 202-222; Idem, Svetil'nik Zemli Russkoj. Žizn' i dejatel'nost' svjatitelja Feofana Zatvornika, *Bogoslovskie Trudy* 30 (1990) 152-175, ici 157, 172 et nn. 60, 65; H. M. Knechten, *Rechtfertigung und Synergie bei Theophan dem Klausner*, Waltrop 1998, 74.

56. Cf. P. Uspenskij, *Istorija Afona*, vol. II, Kiev 1877, 134-144.

57. Cf. Sp. P. Lampros, *Catalogue of the Greek Manuscripts on Mount Athos*, vol. II, Cambridge 1900, 400.

58. Note de possession autographe au f. 174^r^ : *Τὸ παρὸν ὑπάρχει κτῆμα τοῦ πανοσιωτάτου ἁγίου προηγουμένου τῆς ἱερᾶς βασιλικῆς καὶ πατριαρχικῆς μονῆς τοῦ Παντοκράτορος Θεοφάνους ἱερομονάχου οὗ ἡ πατρὶς πέφυκεν τῆς Λαρίσας ἐπαρχεία τοῦ Φαναρίου ἐν ἔτει ,αχπθ'.*

59. Souscription dans: *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243, II, f. 105^r^ *Τελειωθὲν κατὰ τὸ ,ςϡνη' ἔτος ἰνδικτιῶνος ιγ', Θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον καὶ Μεθοδίου πόνος.* Sur le manuscript, cf. E. Granstrem, Katalog grečeskich rukopisej Leningradskich chraniliš̌c, *VV* 31 (1971), 132-144, ici 143-144; T. Ganchou, Héléna Notara Gateliousaina d'Ainos et le Sankt Peterburg Bibl. Publ. gr. 243, *RÉB* 56 (1998), 141-168, ici 148-149; pour Méthode v. aussi *PLP* 17591; L. Politis, Eine Schreiberschule im Kloster τῶν Ὁδηγῶν, *BZ* 51 (1958), 261-287, en part. 270 et n. 88. Une analyse du manuscrit sera contenue dans le volume sur la direction spirituelle des moniales.

60. Cf. Lampros, *Catalogue* (v. ci-dessus, note 57), vol. I, Cambridge 1895, 64.

61. Cf. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τῆς νήσου Λέσβου ἑλληνικῶν χειρογράφων, dans: *Ὁ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει Ἑλληνικὸς Φιλολογικὸς Σύλλογος. Μαυρογορδάτειος Βιβλιοθήκη ἤτοι Γενικὸς περιγραφικὸς κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς*

copié en 1587[62]; *Paris IFEB* 11 exécuté en 1787[63], et *Bruxelles Bibliothèque royale Albert Ier* IV. 692 (XVIII[e] s.) (fragment)[64]. Ce deuxième groupe, dont le *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243 est l'archétype, témoigne d'une deuxième édition de l'ouvrage d'Isaïe, dont je parlerai plus en bas. Le texte original n'a pas été publié, tandis qu'en 1885 on a imprimé la version démotique de Nicéphore de Chios (†1821)[65]. Le moine athonite Arsenios Kottas a publié à la fin des années 50 du XX[e] siècle un petit livre contenant des extraits de l'ouvrage d'Isaïe[66]. Théophane le Reclus avait effectué sa traduction russe sur la base du manuscrit *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243 et il avait intégré, dans la troisième édition de son livre, le texte avec une dernière partie dont le texte était tiré de **P**.

P. Uspenskij soutenait qu'Isaïe écrivait au X[e] siècle[67], tandis que les chercheurs qui lui ont succédé ont affirmé qu'il avait écrit au début du XIII[e] siècle pour Théodora Angelina, fille de l'empereur Isaac II Ange, après la chute de Constantinople lors de la Quatrième Croisade (1204) et que son ouvrage est

---

ἀνὰ τὴν Ἀνατολὴν Βιβλιοθήκαις εὑρισκομένων ἑλληνικῶν χειρογράφων. Παράρτημα τοῦ ΙΖ' τόμου, Konstantinoupolis 1884, 149.

62. Cf. LAMPROS, *Catalogue* (v. ci-dessus, note 57), vol. II, 165.

63. Souscription au f. 167[v]: *Τέλος καὶ τῷ Θεῷ δόξα. Ἐγράφη δὲ αὕτη ἡ βίβλος εἰς τοὺς ,αψπζ' ἰαννουαρίου λα' παρ' ἐμοῦ τοῦ ὑποκρίτου καὶ ἁμαρτωλοῦ Ἰωάννου.* Ce copiste n'est pas connu par ailleurs, cf. L. POLITIS et M. POLITI, Βιβλιογράφοι 17ου-18ου αἰώνα: Συνοπτικὴ καταγραφή, *Δελτίον τοῦ ἱστορικοῦ καὶ Παλαιογραφικοῦ Ἀρχείου* 6 (1988-92), 313-646, ici 486 (signature IFEB 26). Note de possession du monastère de Paisij Veličkovskij dans les marges inférieurs des ff. 1[r]-5[r]: *Τὸ παρὸν βιβλίον ὑπάρχει τοῦ κοινοβίου τοῦ μακαρίτου Παϊσίου ἀρχιμανδρήτου τῶν μοναστηρίων Νιάμτζου καὶ Σέκου.* Cf. désormais la description de A. BINGGELI, M. CASSIN et V. KONTOUMA, Inventaire des manuscrits de l'Institut français d'études byzantines, *RÉB* 72 (2014), 5-128, en part. 30.

64. Cf. les descriptions de M. WITTEK, Les manuscrits grecs de la Bibliothèque Royale Albert I[er]: vingt années d'acquisitions (1954-1973), dans: *Le monde grec. Pensée, littérature, histoire, documents. Hommages à Claire Préaux*, Bruxelles 1975, 245-253, ici 252 et FR. HALKIN, L'hagiographie grecque dans le ms. IV. 692 de Bruxelles, *AB* 89 (1971), 148. Je remercie ici mon ami et collègue Marcel Pirard qui a vérifié pour moi le manuscrit.

65. L'édition de l'archimandrite Christophoros, Hermoupolis 1885 signaléée dans: *DTC*, 8/I (1923), 81 s. v. *Isaïe* (L. PETIT) nous est restée inaccessible. Pour Nicéphore de Chios: L. PETIT, *Bibliographie des acolouthies grecques* [SubsHag 16], Bruxelles 1926, XXVIII-XXIX, 132, 139.

66. *Πρόχειρος πνευματικὸς καθρέπτης. Ἀποσπάσματα ἐκ τῶν Διδαχῶν τοῦ Ἀββᾶ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ Ἀναχωρητοῦ πρὸς τὴν Ὁσίαν Θεοδώραν = Εὐγενικήν = καί τινα ἄλλα σχετικά*, s. l. 1956.

67. USPENSKIJ, *Istorija Afona* (v. ci-dessus, note 56), vol. II, 134.

une étape intermédiaire "entre l'école de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien et le palamisme"[68]. Cette hypothèse, résultat d'un processus d'accumulation sur la base d'une identification jamais vérifiée (et en réalité fausse), n'est pas soutenable. Je voudrais rappeler les éléments disponibles pour une datation de l'œuvre. Les titres et les rubriques dans le manuscrit **P** et dans les autres témoins nous donnent les informations suivantes: l'auteur est un abba ou moine dont le nom est Isaïe (*ἀββᾶς Ἡσαΐας, ὁ ἁμαρτωλὸς μοναχὸς Ἡσαΐας*)[69] et sa correspondante et fille spirituelle est la moniale Théodora Angelina (*μοναχὴ Ἀγγελίνα, Θεοδώρα μοναχὴ ἡ Ἀγγελίνα*), "la Phokaïtissa" (*ἡ Φωκαΐτισσα*). Je commence avec la dernière et avec une constatation très simple: Théodora Angelina n'est pas la fille de l'empereur Isaac II Ange[70]. Les informations sur Théodora dérivent de l'ouvrage même: elle est encore jeune, d'origine noble, elle provient d'une famille proche de la cour impériale. Son père est mort dans des circonstances horribles (*Athos Xénoph.* 34, pp. 166, 171 [manuscrit que

68. Au début il y a une affirmation de I. HAUSHERR, Note sur l'inventeur de la méthode hésychaste, *Orientalia Christiana* 20 (1930), 178-182, en part. 180 n. 1; v. ensuite IDEM, *Le Métérikon de l'abbé Isaïe*, *OCP* 12 (1946), 286-301, en part. 286, repris dans: *Études de spiritualité orientale* [OCA 183], Roma 1969, 105-120; v. aussi ce que le même savant écrivait dans son journal (1944): V. POGGI, Irénée Hausherr à travers des écrits personnels. Trente-six lettres à Michel d'Herbigny (1920-1931) et 'Du travail pour les jeunes' (1944), dans: *Irénée Hausherr et la spiritualité de l'Orient chrétien. Actes du symposium organisé par Richard Čemus à l'Institut Pontifical Oriental* = *OCP* 70 (2004), 127-196, en part. 185-186; J. GOUILLARD, Une compilation spirituelle du XIII[e] siècle: Le livre II de l'abbé Isaïe, *ÉO* 38 (1939), 72-90, en part. 81-82; H.-G. BECK. *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* [Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, Abt. 12: Byzantinisches Handbuch, Teil 2, Bd. 1], München 1959, repr. 1977, 645-646; D. STIERNON, Isaïe, moine byzantin, dans: *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité, Ascétique et Mystique* 7/II (1971), 2080-2082; A. A. THIERMEYER, Das Meterikon. Das frühe Christentum und die Frauen, *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata* 2 (2005), 295-305, en part. 303-305, etc.

69. Les manuscrits du groupe e présentent dans le titre de la *Lettre* 1 la forme «τοῦ ἀββᾶ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ ἀναχωρητοῦ» (au lieu de «τοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ μοναχοῦ Ἡσαΐου» dans t). Je pense à l'intervention d'un rédacteur qui s'est basé sur la forme courante pour Isaïe de Scète (ou de Gaza).

70. Pour soutenir l'identification, on utilise un passage de Niketas Choniates, *Χρονικὴ Διήγησις* (ed. J.-L. VAN DIETEN, *Nicetae Choniatae Historia* [CFHB 11/1-2], vols I-II, Berlin–New York 1975), vol. I, 419.6, sur la prise du voile par la fille de l'empereur. Mais nous savons maintenant que la fille d'Isaac II Ange s'appelait Euphrosyne, cf. R. HIESTAND, Die erste Ehe Isaaks II. Angelos und seine Kinder, *JÖB* 47 (1997), 199-208, ici 204, prénom avec une initiale qui rend peu vraisemblable l'identification avec Théodora.

j'utilise par commodité]). Le nom "Angelina" est bien attesté aux XIII^e-XV^e siècles[71], mais aucune des moniales connues ne nous semble identifiable avec Théodora[72]. Sur l'épithète "Phokaïtissa" (*Φωκαΐτισσα*, féminin de *Φωκαΐτης*) je n'ai pas d'informations pour le moment, mais il me paraît un surnom qui vient de sa patrie (Phocée) ou du monastère dans lequel Théodora vivait[73]. Le moine Isaïe lui non plus n'est pas identifiable avec les homonymes connus aux XIII^e-XIV^e siècles[74]. En tout cas l'ouvrage a été écrit au XIV^e siècle, et très vraisemblablement pendant la deuxième moitié[75].

Nous avons plus de renseignements sur la seconde édition de l'œuvre. En 1449/50 dans le monastère constantinopolitain *τῶν Ὁδηγῶν*, Méthode a exécuté un manuscrit de luxe du livre d'Isaïe, avec un nouveau titre qui rappelle la nouvelle dédicataire: Hélène Notara Gateliousaina. Le manuscrit, enrichi par des miniatures qui illustrent la vie des moniales (v. pl. 1, p. 385)[76], a été commandé par la même Hélène ou par un membre de sa famille (son père,

71. Cf. *PLP* 146-153, 10931, 10942, 21341, 21351, 21393, 21903, 24016, 25156.

72. Je mentionne ici seulement Théodora Cantacuzène Angelina, mère de Jean Cantacuzène (*PLP* 10942) et une Angelina supérieure d'un monastère dédié à la Mère de Dieu à Constantinople en 1341 (*PLP* 147).

73. Sur la base de cettes observations l'hypothèse avancée avec peu de conviction par GOUILLARD, Une compilation (v. ci-dessus note 68), 82-83 tombe définitivement. Pour Phocée au XIV^e siècle v. maintenant, I. PÉREZ MARTÍN, The Greek Culture of the Genoese Phokaia: The Life and the Books of Antonio Malaspina, *RÉB* 73 (2015), 123-160.

74. Cf. *PLP* 6717-6746.

75. La date du *Sankt-Peterburg Rossijskaja Nacional'naja Biblioteka gr.* 243 (1449/50) est un *terminus ante* assuré, tandis que le *terminus post quem* est fourni par la présence dans la *Lettre* 3 d'un texte attribué à Syméon le Nouveau Théologien (inc.: *Ἄδειαν εὗρεν ὁ διάβολος*) attesté pour la première fois vers la fin du XIII^e-début du XIV^e siècle. Le chapitre est cité par le moine Nicéphore dans son florilège (*Λόγος περὶ νήψεως καὶ φυλακῆς καρδίας μεστὸς οὐ τῆς τυχούσης ὠφελείας*, dans: *Φιλοκαλία τῶν ἱερῶν νηπτικῶν* (v. ci-dessus, note 15), vol. IV, 25, ll. 13-25 et il est le premier d'une série de 22 chapitres sous le nom de Syméon le Nouveau Théologien; cf. J. DARROUZÈS, *Syméon le Nouveau Théologien. Chapitres théologiques, gnostiques et pratiques* [SC 51bis], Paris 1996, 194-195. Le témoin le plus ancien de cette compilation est le manuscrit *Oxford Bodleian Library Canon. gr.* 16, ff. 97^r-103^v, des premières années du XIV^e siècle. On retrouve le morceau dans des séries plus courtes des chapitres à partir de la deuxième moitié du XIII^e siècle.

76. À ce propos, voir V. D. LIHAČEVA, Rol' bytovyh realij i pejzaža v miniatjurah rukopisi Gosudarstvennoj Publičnoj Biblioteki gr. N° 243, *VV* 27 (1967), 229-242; EADEM, *Byzantine Miniature. Masterpieces of Byzantine Miniature of the IXth-XVth Centuries in Soviet Collections*, Moscou 1977, planches 50-55.

Luc Notaras?)[77]. Un ouvrage, qui à l'origine avait été adressé à une moniale renfermée dans un monastère, était maintenant adressé à une grande dame, veuve depuis quelques mois (le premier mari d'Hélène, Georges Gattilusio, mourut en 1449).

Le livre d'Isaïe est de dimensions considérables et est articulé *grosso modo* en deux parties. Après un bref prologue, le livre présente 140 apophtegmes "des saintes mères" (Sarah, Synclétique, Mélanie, Théodora, Matrona). Isaïe s'est limité à mettre au féminin les *Apophthegmata Patrum* et d'autres textes spirituels, avec peu d'éléments originaux. Dans la suite, on retrouve 193 chapitres différents par leur origine, leur extension et leur argument. La première partie du livre est appelée par son auteur *métérikòn*. Un *intermezzo* entre la première et la deuxième partie de l'ouvrage est constitué par sept lettres d'Isaïe à Théodora sur divers arguments. Le reste de la section est formé par des chapitres d'extension variée, didascalies, narrations, etc.

L'articulation désordonnée du livre, dans lequel l'auteur a procédé par accumulation (selon toute probabilité à des moments différents) et l'utilisation désinvolte d'ouvrages et d'auteurs plus anciens, le total manque d'originalité n'ont pas empêché que le livre d'Isaïe aie eu une popularité considérable au Mont Athos à l'époque moderne, au moment de la "renaissance philocalique" avec Paisij Veličkovskij, puis en Russie au XIX[e] siècle avec Théophane le Reclus.

En marge des textes adressés aux moniales que je viens de présenter il serait nécessaire de rappeler aussi les lettres qui accompagnent l'envoi à la correspondante d'un ouvrage d'édification spirituelle. Je fais mention ici de deux cas certainement bien différents. D'un côté Démétrius Cydonès fait présent à la fille de Jean VI Cantacuzène Hélène[78] de sa traduction des *Soliloquia* pseudo-

77. Il est impossible de se rallier aux conclusions de GANCHOU, Héléna Notara Gateliousaina (v. ci-dessus, note 59), 150: le livre a été envoyé à Hélène par le père Luc Notaras, parce qu'elles sont basées sur les vers qu'on lit au début du livre, présents aussi dans t (et que le "père" est donc le père spirituel, c'est-à-dire Isaïe).

78. Démétrius Kydonès, *Τῇ Βασιλίδι* (Lettre 25, éd. R. J. LOENERTZ, *Démétrius Kydonès Correspondance* [Studi e Testi 186], Città del Vaticano 1956), vol. I, 54-55; cf. FR. TINNEFELD, *Demetrios Kydones, Briefe* [Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 16], Stuttgart 1982, 1/2 497-500; J. DEMETRACOPOULOS, The Sitz im Leben of Demetrius Cydones' Translation of Pseudo-Augustine's Soliloquia. Remarks on a Recent Edition, *Quaestio. Annuario di storia della metafisica* 6 (2006), 191-258 en part. 216-218; v. aussi FR. KIANKA, The Letters of Demetrios Kydones to Empress Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina, *DOP* 46 (1992), 155-164 en part. 157-159.

augustiniens, texte qui aura pendant les derniers décennies de Byzance et la Turcocratie (jusqu'à Nicodème l'Hagiorite et Eugène Boulgaris), une diffusion extraordinaire, d'autre part Gennade Scholarios adresse son ouvrage *Sur le premier service de Dieu* à Simonis Asanina Paléologina[79], devenue la moniale Sophrosynè[80], avec une lettre fort intéressante aussi pour les instructions ascétiques données et pour la mention de l'autorité de Basile le Grand.

Mais il faut conclure. Laissant de côté certaines données positives (l'extraction sociale des moniales, le fait que les pères spirituels sont souvent des métropolites connus...) ainsi que le contenu des ouvrages (qui, d'habitude, n'est pas spécifiquement féminin), je voudrais simplement souligner quelques éléments importants. En premier lieu les auteurs des textes de direction spirituelle pour les moniales, simples lettres, règles ou compositions plus longues, parlent souvent de l'importance des pages qu'ils écrivent pour la vie et la conduite de leurs filles spirituelles. Pour cette raison, ces textes deviennent la lecture principale des moniales, avec les ouvrages de la tradition (en premier lieu les Apophtegmes). Ce fait explique aussi pourquoi ces écrits sont conservés et recopiés par les soins des filles spirituelles (Irène-Eulogie pour Théolepte, Eulogie pour Jacques de Chalcédoine). Certaines de ces copies nous sont parvenues et parfois, il s'agit du seul exemplaire de l'ouvrage (Jacques de Chalcédoine). Dans d'autres cas, la popularité de l'auteur (Grégoire Palamas) entraîne la multiplication des manuscrits et une circulation indépendante de la volonté de la correspondante. Dans d'autres cas encore (Isaïe), l'œuvre connaît de façon surprenante une deuxième édition et est réutilisée pour une nouvelle destinataire. Mais je voudrais souligner un autre aspect. Ce genre de littérature de direction spirituelle pour les femmes connaît à partir de la fin du XIII^e^ siècle jusqu'au XV^e^ une popularité qu'elle n'avait jamais connue précédemment. La littérature de direction spirituelle pour les moniales semble une production caractéristique de l'époque paléologue, qu'on ne doit pas rapprocher seulement des exemples anciens des traités "aux vierges" de l'époque patristique mais aussi de précédents plus proches (je laisse ici à côté les lettres de l'épistolaire de Théodore Studite)[81] tels que les homélies aux moniales de l'époque médio-

79. *PLP* 1534.

80. L. PETIT, X. A. SIDERIDÈS, M. JUGIE, *Œuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol. IV, Paris 1935, 234-235. Sur la lettre de Gennade, v. l'article de Marie-Hélène Blanchet dans ce volume.

81. Cf. J. GOUILLARD, La femme de qualité dans les lettres de Théodore Studite, *JÖB* 32/2 (1982), 445-452.

byzantine[82], et du XIV^e siècle[83]. On pourrait évoquer des raisons particulières pour chercher à donner une explication à cette nouvelle popularité, telles que le modèle représenté au XIV^e siècle par Théolepte de Phildelphie (le cas de Nathanaël est significatif à ce propos). Mais plus généralement, cette irruption des femmes (quoique avec l'intermédiaire des pères spirituels) dans la littérature spirituelle byzantine est une nouveauté, qu'on peut lire sur la base de l'évolution interne du monachisme féminin à Byzance–telle qu'elle est perceptible aussi grâce aux *Typika*[84],– ou mieux en évoquant la réalité, sans doute différente, de l'Occident, où, comme nous le rappelle Bernard McGinn, à partir du 1200 les femmes commencent à occuper une place centrale dans la spiritualité[85].

82. Sans mentionner ici les exemples de l'époque formative du monachisme (*Histoire Lausiaque*, etc.), v. au moins les *Discours aux vierges* de Luc Adialeiptos (x^e siècle): A. RIGO, Un autore spirituale sconosciuto del x secolo: Luca Adialeiptos, *Byz* 79 (2009), 306-359 et l'homéliaire du ms. *Oxford Bodleian Library Cromwell* 22, v. B. CROSTINI LAPPIN, A Fourteenth-Century Homiliary for Nuns: Structure, Composition and Context of MS. Cromwell 22, *BZ* 95 (2002), 35-68.

83. Je rappelle les homélies de Théolepte, et celles de Grégoire Palamas, n° 42 *Sur la nativité de la Vierge* (*Εἰς τὴν σωτήριον γέννησιν τῆς πανυπεράγνου δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας*), éd. B. PSEUTONGAS, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Συγγράμματα*, vol. VI, Thessaloniki 2015, 452-459, et du patriarche Calliste I^er: *Ὁμιλία πρὸς μοναζούσας εἰς τὸ ῥητὸν τοῦ θείου Παύλου τό· εὐσχημόνως περιπατεῖν*, éd. K. PAÏDAS, Secular Life's Behaviours and Debauchery among Nuns. An Unedited Homily by the Patriarch of Constantinople Kallistos I, *ZRVI* 52 (2015), 343-357.

84. Cf. les remarques de A. E. LAIOU, Observations on the Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women, *BF* 9 (1985), 59-102, en part. 87-91 (= EADEM, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, II).

85. Je renvoie à la lecture de son beau livre, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, vol. III: *The Flowering of Mysticism. Men and Women in the New Mysticism 1200-1350*, New York 1998.

MARIE-HÉLÈNE BLANCHET*

Spiritual Guidance for Aristocratic Women: A Living Tradition after the Fall of Constantinople? Gennadios Scholarios and the Nun Sophrosyne

The Palaiologan period is extremely rich in sources on aristocratic nuns. Although the entrance into a monastery implied theoretically equal treatment of nuns regardless of their social origin, the *Typika* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that regulated female monastic life made an exception for the nuns from the Byzantine aristocracy. Special provisions allowed them to escape some of the constraints others were subject to, a phenomenon which is also traceable in the correspondence between spiritual fathers and their spiritual daughters of aristocratic origin. Spiritual father's advice generally aimed at moderation rather than encouragement of a rigorous asceticism as if his role was to mitigate and adapt the harshness of the rule according to the personality of his spiritual daughter.

In the light of these considerations, I would like to analyse two fifteenth-century letters of spiritual guidance by Gennadios Scholarios, on which scholars and specialists in female monasticism have hardly commented[1]. Both letters were probably addressed to a single person, a member of the large family of Asanes, Simonis Palaiologina Asanina, who took the monastic name Sophrosyne. Gennadios' letters contain some information on the living conditions of this "lady" within her monastery; moreover, they provide interesting information on the recommendations lavished by the spiritual father, who was also personally involved in this correspondence. A comparison with the sources of the fourteenth

* CNRS, UMR 8167 Orient et Méditerranée, Monde byzantin (Paris).

1. They were just mentioned by N. PAPADIMITRIOU, Les femmes de rang impérial et la vie monastique à Byzance, in: *Women and Byzantine monasticism. Proceedings of the Athens Symposium, 28-29 March 1988*, ed. by J. Y. PERREAULT, E. KOUBENA and M. TOLI [Publications of the Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens 1], Athens 1991, 67-85, here at 73.

century –particularly the letter exchange between Theoleptos of Philadelphia and Eirene-Eulogia Choumnaina and the one between the Metropolitan of Chalcedon and Eulogia– will allow us to outline the characteristics of Sophrosyne's case and decide whether it follows the Byzantine tradition of spiritual direction, even in the aftermath of the Fall of Constantinople.

I. The two letters by Gennadios

We must first briefly recall some biographical facts of George Gennadios Scholarios[2]. He was born in the early fifteenth century, and from the late 1430s until 1447, he was the personal secretary of emperor John VIII Palaiologos. In 1449/1450, he took monastic vows, while continuing to lead the fight against the Union of Florence, as he had chosen to devote himself to that cause. Gennadios entered the monastery of Charsianites[3] in Constantinople, but he stayed in touch with the dignitaries he previously knew, including despot Demetrios Palaiologos, also engaged in the anti-unionist struggle[4]. It happens that the recipient of Gennadios' letters under consideration, Sophrosyne, is none other than the sister of Demetrios' wife, Theodora Asanina[5]. We can deduce her

2. See Fr. Tinnefeld, Georgios Gennadios Scholarios, in: *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. II: *XIII^e-XIX^e s.*, ed. by C. G. Conticello and V. Conticello, Turnhout 2002, 477-549; M.-H. Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios (vers 1400-vers 1472). Un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'Empire byzantin* [Archives de l'Orient chrétien 20], Paris 2008; M. Angold, The Autobiographies of the Patriarch Gennadios II Scholarios, in: *Reading in the Byzantine Empire and Beyond*, ed. by T. Shawcross and I. Toth, Cambridge 2018, 68-90.

3. On the Charsianites monastery, which was probably located in the southwestern area of Constantinople, see H. Hunger, Eine spätbyzantinische Bildbeschreibung der Geburt Christi. Mit einem Exkurs über das Charsianites-Kloster in Konstantinopel, *JÖBG* 7 (1958), 125-140, here at 136-139; R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin. Première partie: Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat œcuménique*. III, *Les églises et les monastères*, Paris ²1969, 501-502.

4. See his letters to Demetrios at that period: *Γεωργίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ἐκ προτροπῆς τῆς ἱερᾶς συνάξεως τῶν τοῦ πατρίου καὶ ἀληθοῦς δόγματος ἀντιποιουμένων [πρὸς Δημήτριον τὸν Παλαιολόγον]* (ed. L. Petit, X. A. Sidéridès and M. Jugie, *Œuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, vol. I-VIII, Paris 1928-1936 = Petit, Sidéridès, Jugie, *Scholarios*), vol. III, 117-136; *Γενναδίου, ἐν τῇ μονῇ τοῦ Χαρσιανείτου. <Λόγος ἐπιστολιμαῖος τῷ δεσπότῃ Δημητρίῳ, ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ>* (ed. *ibidem*), vol. III, 174-178.

5. On Theodora, see *PLP* 1530 and 91379. Just after the fall of Constantinople, Gennadios Scholarios was also directly in touch with her about the treatise of Pletho: *Γενναδίου*

identity by the information provided in the title of one of the two letters: "To my very noble and honourable lady in God and sister of the most excellent *basilissa*, lady Sophrosyne"[6]. The alluded princess (*βασιλίσσης*) refers probably to the wife of a despot, according to the almost exclusive use of this title in the fifteenth century[7]: she is therefore either Theodora Asanina or Caterina Zaccaria, despot Thomas Palaiologos' wife[8]. As the other letter by Gennadios to a nun gives the name Simonis Palaiologina Asanina[9], all scholars make a connection between this Asanina and the *basilissa*'s sister and agree to identify the recipient of these two letters with Simonis/Sophrosyne, Theodora's sister[10].

Gennadios had thus personal connections to the entire family of Asanes, not only to Sophrosyne. On the other hand, we know that, just before the Fall of Constantinople, he kept close ties to some monastic circles of the capital: he seems to have been the "master" of some nuns hostile to the Union of the Churches, like him. When the historian Doukas recalls the popular rejection of the Florentine decree, he mentions "the nuns who had a pure opinion and who engaged in God in Orthodoxy, in accordance with their own opinion and their master Gennadius"[11]. This passage shows that Gennadios played an essential

---

ταπεινοῦ: ἐπιστολὴ τῇ βασιλίσσῃ περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ (ed. PETIT, SIDÉRIDÈS, JUGIE, *Scholarios*), vol. IV, 151-155.

6. *Τῇ κατὰ Θεὸν εὐγενεστάτῃ καὶ τιμιωτάτῃ κυρίᾳ μου καὶ ἀδελφῇ τῆς ὑψηλοτάτης βασιλίσσης, τῇ κυρᾷ Σωφροσύνῃ τῇ ἐν μοναχαῖς ὁσιωτάτῃ καὶ αἰδεσιμωτάτῃ* (ed. PETIT, SIDÉRIDÈS, JUGIE, *Scholarios*, vol. IV, 234-235 = Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*), 234.1-3. On this letter, see also *ibidem*, XV-XVI; SP. LAMPROS, *Παλαιολόγεια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά*, vols. I-IV, Athens 1912-1930, vol. II, 322-324 and λε'-λς'; T. ZESES, *Γεννάδιος Β' Σχολάριος. Βίος, συγγράμματα, διδασκαλία* [Analekta Vlatadon 30], Thessaloniki ²1988, 309; BLANCHET, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios* (as in footnote 2), 222-223.

7. See A. TZAVARA and T. GANCHOU, La *principessa Caterina Paleologina*. À propos des βασίλισσαι de Morée (fin XIV^e^-début XV^e^ siècle), *Ἐῶα καὶ Ἑσπέρια* 4 (1999-2000), 67-85, here at 72, especially footnotes 25 and 26, with an analysis how Pseudo-Kodinos and Sphrantzes use this term.

8. See *PLP* 21342.

9. *Τῇ εὐγενεστάτῃ καὶ πάσης ἀρετῆς πεπληρωμένῃ ἐκ Θεοῦ τῇ κυρᾷ Σιμωνίδι Παλαιολογίνῃ τῇ Ἀσανίνῃ* (ed. PETIT, SIDÉRIDÈS, JUGIE, *Scholarios*), vol. IV, 502-503 = Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Simonis*), here at 502.9-10.

10. See *PLP* 1534.

11. Doukas, *History* (ed. V. GRECU, *Ducas Istoria turco-bizantină (1341-1462)* [Scriptores byzantini 1], Bucharest 1958), 317,12-14 (36,4): *Τότε αἱ δοκοῦσαι καθαραὶ καὶ εἰς Θεὸν ἐν ὀρθοδοξίᾳ σχολάζουσαι μονάστριαι κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐταῖς καὶ τὸν αὐτῶν διδάσκαλον Γεννάδιον.*

role with one or several communities of nuns. However, it is impossible to say whether Sophrosyne belonged to these anti-unionist nuns, because none of the letters alludes to the Union. If not both, at least one of these letters should be placed in a quite different context.

This correspondence raises certain dating problems that should be mentioned, if not solved here. A single manuscript, which is not autograph, includes both letters of Gennadios, the *Vaticanus Rossianus* 986 (*olim* 16)[12]. The letters can be found on ff. 307r-307v (letter to Simonis) and 308r-308v (letter to Sophrosyne); both are not dated. However, they are followed in the same manuscript by a treatise mentioned in the letter to Sophrosyne, "The first service of God" (ff. 309-333). This treatise is dated in the late 1457 or in 1458 and was drafted in the Prodromos monastery near Serres, after Gennadios' resignation from the Patriarchate (he was in charge from early 1454 to early 1456)[13]. Since Gennadios sent to Sophrosyne that treatise –originally composed for a monk– his letter necessarily should be dated roughly between 1457/1458 and *ca.* 1472, the period of his death. One particular difficulty lies in his signature at the bottom of this letter: "the servant of God's children, Gennadios"[14]. Some modern scholars considered this formula to have been modelled on the papal signing *servus servorum Dei*; they interpreted it therefore as an indication that Gennadios was again Patriarch while writing this letter[15]. However, the loan translation is not accurate, since the Greek text gives *τέκνων* where the Latin repeats *servorum*. Consequently, we should interpret this formula differently, for instance as a monastic signature[16]. Nevertheless, as the debate is not closed,

12. See C. Van de Vorst, Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften der Bibliotheca Rossiana, *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 23/11 (1906), 492-508, here at 501-508.

13. *Περὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ Θεοῦ λατρείας, ἢ νόμος εὐαγγελικὸς ἐν ἐπιτομῇ. Αὐτοσχεδίως καὶ εὐλήπτως ἐξεδόθη μοναχῷ τινι φίλῳ ζητήσαντι* (ed. Petit, Sidéridès, Jugie, *Scholarios*), vol. IV, 236-264 = Gennadios Scholarios, *On the first service of God*). See also *ibidem*, xvi; Ζήσης, *Γεννάδιος Β' Σχολάριος* (as in footnote 6), 308-309. The manuscripts are described by Petit, Sidéridès, Jugie, *Scholarios*, vol. I, xix, no 18; xxiii-xxiv, no 5; xxxix, no 6.

14. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.33: *Ὁ δοῦλος τῶν τέκνων τοῦ Θεοῦ, Γεννάδιος.*

15. See M. Jugie, Introduction, in Petit, Sidéridès, Jugie, *Scholarios*, vol. IV, xi and xv-xvi; cf. also M. Jugie, Les œuvres pastorales de Gennade Scholarios. Précisions sur ses trois patriarcats, *EO* 34 (1935), 151-159, here at 152.

16. See Ζήσης, *Γεννάδιος Β' Σχολάριος* (as in footnote 6), 196-198, 312; Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios* (as in footnote 2), 222-223.

neither the date of the letter can be more accurately defined (placed after 1457/1458), nor the office held by Gennadios when he wrote that letter.

The epistle addressed to Simonis includes no evidence for the date. Gennadios affixed his usual signature as a monk, "the very humble Gennadios"[17] so that the letter can roughly be dated somewhere between 1449/1450 and 1472. However, in the manuscript, this letter precedes the one to Sophrosyne. Moreover, the name of the recipient changed between the two letters suggesting that Simonis, who was probably a novice, had meanwhile taken her vows and adopted a monastic name. Consequently, the letter to Simonis probably predates the one to Sophrosyne, that means it must have been written before 1457/1458, in a period when the young woman was about to become a nun. It may be added that a sufficient time separates the two letters since in the second one Gennadios argued that: "We have not written sooner to your Honour because of the past difficulties of the times"[18]. This somewhat vague sentence may allude to the Fall of Constantinople. Therefore this may have been the first letter he sent to Sophrosyne after 1453, while the other could be dated before the Fall. However, this conjecture remains quite uncertain.

It is not even clear where the protagonists lived. At the end of his first letter to Simonis, Gennadios replied to his spiritual daughter who had expressed her desire to see him, that this was also his wish, but without announcing or absolutely excluding a visit. This suggests that such visitation would have been possible and that no great distance separated the two characters. On the contrary, in the letter to Sophrosyne, it is evident that the correspondents were away from each other: "If it were possible for us to be also near that place, as you wish, we would perhaps even help you in person for your fervour in God; but we do not find ourselves there now, neither you are here"[19]. Had Sophrosyne taken the veil in a monastery in Constantinople, as we would be tempted to believe due to the concentration of nunneries in the capital?[20] If we assume that both

17. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Simonis*, 503.22: *Ὁ ἐλάχιστος Γεννάδιος.*

18. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.27: *Οὐδὲν προεγράψαμεν τῇ τιμιότητί σου διὰ τὰς παρελθούσας δυσκολίας τῶν καιρῶν.*

19. *Ibidem*, 234.21-24: *Εἰ ἦν δυνατὸν ἐγγὺς εἶναι καὶ ἡμᾶς τοῦ τόπου αὐτοῦ, οὗπερ ἐπιθυμεῖς, ἴσως καὶ ἀπὸ ζώσης φωνῆς ἐβοηθήσαμεν ἄν τῇ κατὰ Θεόν σου προτροπῇ· ἀλλ' οὔτε ἡμεῖς αὐτοῦ χώραν ἔχομεν νῦν, οὔτε σὺ ἐνταῦθα.*

20. We know about fifteen female monasteries, which were still active in the fifteenth century, most of them in Constantinople, but there were of course others, see M. Loukaki, Monastères de femmes à Byzance (XIIe-1453), in: *Les femmes et le monachisme byzantine* (as in footnote 1), 33-42, here at 35.

were in Constantinople at the time of the first letter –probably before the Fall– and if the nun remained in the same monastery, it should be understood that Gennadios was far from the capital when he sent his second letter. However, it can only be mere speculation because of the vagueness of the evidence provided by the texts.

We must, therefore, keep in mind that the two letters were addressed to Sophrosyne, a member of the Asanes family, but they were composed in two distinct periods, the second one after 1457/1458.

II. The contents of the letters

What do these letters tell us about the nun Sophrosyne? Their titles as well as their beginning focus on her aristocratic origin: the first word in each of them is *εὐγενεστάτη*, i.e. "very noble (woman)"[21], a sign of the deference Gennadios paid to his spiritual daughter. She seems to have entered the monastery at a very young age, without having been previously married: "Before being mixed with the storms and troubles of the life of most people, with true wisdom and upright knowledge, you have made the best choice; you have rejected all the emptiness of women who are attached to life; you have given yourself to the real bridegroom, Christ"[22]. The tone of this sentence is the one expected in a letter addressed to a nun, especially the idea often put forward of the renunciation of the joys of human marriage in favour of the union with Christ[23]. The interest of this quotation lies in its temporal dimension: it suggests that Sophrosyne had no life experience before devoting herself to her religious vocation. This passage, together with some others, suggest that the young woman entered the monastery by choice. In the letter to Simonis, Gennadios mentions her "very well-disposed feelings" (*τῇ λαμπρᾷ διαθέσει*) towards piety, "the fruit that (her)

21. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.5; Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Simonis*, 502.11.

22. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.9-12: *Πρὶν ἐμπλακῆναι ταῖς καταιγίσι καὶ ταῖς ταραχαῖς τοῦ τῶν πολλῶν βίου, ὄντως σωφροσύνῃ καὶ γνώσει ἀκεραίῳ ἐξελέξω τὸ κάλλιστον· πᾶσαν ἀπέρριψας τὴν ματαιότητα τῶν προσηλωμένων τῷ βίῳ γυναικῶν· τῷ ἀληθινῷ ἐννυμφεύθης νυμφίῳ Χριστῷ.*

23. See the same idea and quite the same vocabulary (for instance *νυμφίος* for Christ) in the correspondence between Theoleptos of Philadelphia and Princess Eirene-Eulogia Choumnaina Palaiologina: Theoleptos of Philadelphia, *Letters* (ed. A. Constantinides Hero, *The Life and Letters of Theoleptos of Philadelphia* [The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources 20], Brookline Mass. 1994), 34-37.

soul bears" (*τοῦ καρποῦ τῆς ψυχῆς σου*) and "the power of God's grace inside (her)" (*τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἐν σοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάριτος*)[24]. Despite their partly rhetorical character, these expressions imply her inclination toward religious life, which her spiritual father praised repeatedly. It is also possible that her family have destined her since her childhood for the monastic life; however, Gennadios' letters contain no such indication[25].

The letters barely reflect upon the living conditions of Sophrosyne inside the monastery, but some elements are worth mentioning. Gennadios gave among other the following advice: "Do not neglect the office in the church, but in your cell devote your time to manual work and prayer"[26]. The daily service was naturally one of the main occupations of the nuns; it was also the gathering place of all nuns denoted here in the term "ecclesiastical synaxis" (*τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς συνάξεως*). Obviously, this communal time opposed the time the nun spent alone in her cell. Experts on female monasticism in the Palaiologan period have pointed to the fact that nuns of aristocratic background usually lived in a single cell –as it also seems here to be the case– while the other nuns, according to some *Typika*, slept in dormitories[27]. Sophrosyne would, therefore, enjoy such a privilege due to her rank. However, the reference to "manual work" could be regarded as inconsistent with what we know about the activities of aristocratic nuns, as these were usually exempt from work and material duties for the community[28]. Gennadios did not specify the type of

---

24. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Simonis*, 502.12.15.16.

25. A.-M. Talbot, Late Byzantine Nuns: By Choice or Necessity?, *BF* 9 (1985), 103-117, here at 105-106 (= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, XVII).

26. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.7-8: *Τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς συνάξεως μὴ ἀμελεῖν, ἐν δὲ τῷ κελλίῳ σου ἐργοχείρῳ καὶ εὐχῇ καταναλίσκειν τὴν ὥραν.*

27. See A. E. Laiou, Observations on the Life and Ideology of Byzantine Women, *BF* 9 (1985), 59-102, here 76 (= Eadem, *Gender, Society and Economic Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Hampshire 1992, II); C. Galatariotou, Byzantine Women's Monastic Communities: The Evidence of the Typika, *JÖB* 38 (1988), 263-290, here at 267. See especially P. Gautier, Le typikon de la Théotokos Kécharitômènè, *RÉB* 43/1 (1985), 5-165, text: 19-155 (= Gautier, Typikon Kécharitômènè), here at 41-43, esp. lines 381-396.

28. Laiou, Observations on the Life (as in footnote 27), 90; Galatariotou, Byzantine Women's Monastic Communities (as in footnote 27), 271-273. See also the *Typikon* of Bebaia Elpis (ed. H. Delehaye, *Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues* [Mémoires. Deuxième série, tom. 13], Brussels 1921 = Delehaye, *Deux typica*), 18-105, here at 49.18-22 (56); Engl. transl. by A.-M. Talbot, Bebaia Elpis: Typikon of Theodora Synadene for

Sophrosyne's manual work, but he mentioned it thrice using the same term, i.e. *ἐργόχειρον*[29]. The first time was in the above-quoted sentence, the second time as he encouraged Sophrosyne to pray while working, and finally at the end of the letter recommending her the following: "You only have to devote yourself to God every day. And strive for it by leaning on your manual work"[30]. Thus, it should have been a work she could perform daily in her cell. Assuming that manual activity helped Sophrosyne to remain concentrated, this could include any kind of sewing she would make for herself. Nevertheless, the exact nature of her handiwork remains unclear; similarly unclear is whether the monastery should profit or not from it. Since she could produce it in her cell[31], we could also think of textiles, embroidery, or any object that could be sold and contribute to the revenues of the monastery. Gennadios' insistence on manual work is striking, but it is difficult to explain it, as it can also be linked to Sophrosyne's own character[32].

Yet, she was obviously educated. In addition to the social status, literacy was traditionally another reason for an internal division in monasteries between the illiterates and those who could read: the first worked and were restricted to physical labour, while the latter took care of the church and were assigned to hymnody[33]. There is no doubt that Sophrosyne had access to written culture: she initiated the correspondence with Gennadios who both times simply replied to a letter he had received from her[34]. Sophrosyne not only wrote to her spiritual father, but she probably asked him also for reading advice. Gennadios

---

the Convent of the Mother of God Bebaia Elpis in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 57, 1512-1578.

29. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.8.11.30.

30. *Ibidem*, 235.29-30: *Ἀρκεῖ ὅτι καθιεροῖς σεαυτὴν καθ' ἡμέραν τῷ Θεῷ· καὶ τοῦτο σπούδαζε ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐργοχείρου σου.*

31. Whereas usually the nuns seem to have communally done their work on behalf of the monastery: see GAUTIER, Typikon Kécharitômènè, 40-43, esp. lines 387-390; 74-75 (esp. lines 995-997).

32. According to Gregorios Sinaïtes, manual work is necessary for the weakest monks, see A. RIGO, Principes et canons pour le choix des livres et la lecture dans la littérature spirituelle byzantine (XIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècles), *Bulgaria mediaevalis* 3 (2012), 171-185, here at 179.

33. LOUKAKI, Monastères de femmes à Byzance (as in footnote 19), 41; DELEHAYE, *Deux typica*, 47.29-31 (53).

34. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.6; Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Simonis*, 502.11-12.

recommended her two books with the remark that these two should suffice[35]: the first was one of his treatises, while the second was the *Asketikon* by Basil of Caesarea, referred to herein as "the monastic rule" (*ὁ κανὼν ὁ μοναχικός*)[36]. *Asketikon*[37] is indeed one of the founding texts for monastic life. The ascetic writings of Basil were part of the recommended readings in nunneries and the kind of works likely to be available there: Gennadios did not seem to doubt that Sophrosyne could consult the book. As Alice-Mary Talbot noticed, the *Typika* of nunneries regularly quoted Basil the Great; however, it is surprising that Gennadios should limit his advice only to this Church Father[38].

Let us now turn to his treatise, "On the first service of God", which Gennadios recommended and sent to Sophrosyne[39]. Unfortunately, none of the existing manuscripts contains any marginal note indicating that it could have been read by the nun. Gennadios distinguished this "first service", for which he referred to his treatise (written at the request of a monk), and the "second service" that he briefly summarised in his second letter to Sophrosyne in the form of a series of commands. This "first service", or more precisely "first form of divine worship", is also called "evangelical law" in the title given by Gennadios[40]. It focuses on the inner state of mind expected from a monk, as opposed to the external manifestations of piety, the second way to worship God. Gennadios stresses that it is of paramount importance for a monk to understand the message of Christ fully, and this clear understanding should be then reflected on the monk's relationship with God and human beings.

---

35. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.24: *Ἀρκείτω σοι τοῦ Βασιλείου τὸ σύνταγμα καὶ τοῦτο ὃ νῦν σοι πέμπω περὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ Θεοῦ λατρείας.*

36. See previous footnote, and *ibidem*, 234.20.

37. See A. M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* [Oxford Early Christian Studies], Oxford 2005, which contains also translations of the texts.

38. A.-M. Talbot, Bluestocking Nuns: Intellectual Life in the Convents of Late Byzantium, in: *Okeanos. Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, ed. by C. Mango and O. Pritsak with the assistance of U. M. Pasicznyk = *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983), 604-618, here at 608 (about Maximus the Confessor) and 612-613 (about Basil the Great, but also Gregory of Nazianzus) [= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life* (as in footnote 25), XVIII].

39. See *supra* footnote 13.

40. Gennadios Scholarios, *On the first service of God*, 236.1-3: *Περὶ τῆς πρώτης τοῦ Θεοῦ λατρείας, ἣ νόμος εὐαγγελικὸς ἐν ἐπιτομῇ. Αὐτοσχεδίως καὶ εὐλήπτως ἐξεδόθη μοναχῷ τινι φίλῳ ζητήσαντι.*

Compared to it, "the second (worship) is inferior; it consists of prostrations, prayers, psalmodies and this kind of things"[41]. The "evangelical and spiritual law", as defined by Gennadios who relies here on the content of the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew, means observing God's commandments with fear and love, in order to find the happiness prepared by God for human beings[42]. He insists on the foremost spiritual law of Christ, superior to all other laws, that of nature as well as that of Moses. This treatise aims at explaining the core of Christian teaching, which the monk should put into practice in his own life with faith, love, charity and compassion. Therefore, by sending a work authored by him, Gennadios sought to develop the moral conscience of his spiritual daughter, emphasising the correct understanding of the spirit of Christianity.

Gennadios thus sent to Sophrosyne a treatise written for a monk, a friend of his. He mentioned this fact in his letter and recommended her to focus within his treatise on what concerned her as a woman: "Read it and comply with it for what concerns you; because there are also therein some points that apply only to men; but after picking out what is yours, comply with it and keep it"[43]. That means that Gennadios considered that there were differences between the male and female experience of monastic life, without naming them; yet, he also believed that a woman could read such a text and have by herself enough discernment. More generally, spiritual fathers did not point out a major differentiation within male and female monastic culture as it is also proven by the use of Basil's "rule", written for men but also applied to nuns[44]. However, the reading lists for women were much shorter than the ones for men, while the writings of the spiritual father himself seem to have been considered much

41. *Ibidem*, 236.9-10: *δευτέρας δὲ καὶ ἐλάττονος, τῆς ἐν προσκυνήσεσι καὶ εὐχαῖς καὶ ψαλμῳδίαις καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις*. This dinstinction was borrowed from Thomas Aquinas, *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis Opera omnia iussu impensaque Leonis XIII edita*. Tomus IX, *Secunda Secundae Summae theologiae: a quaestione LVII ad quaestionem CXII*, Romae 1897, p. 213 (quaestio 84, articulus 2: "Utrum adoratio importet actum corporalem").

42. Gennadios Scholarios, *On the First of God*, 236.11-13: *περὶ τῆς πρώτης καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτης λατρείας τοῦ Θεοῦ λέγομεν πρῶτον ἐν ἐπιτομῇ ἅμα καὶ σαφηνείᾳ τοῖς ἐν τῷ ὄρει τοῦ Κυρίου λογίοις ἀκολουθοῦντες, ἃ νόμος ἐστὶν ὁ εὐαγγελικὸς καὶ πνευματικός*. See also the whole beginning of the treatise, *ibidem*, 236.5-237.12.

43. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.18: *Αὐτὸν ἀναγίνωσκε καὶ τήρει ἐν τοῖς ἀνήκουσιν· εἰσὶ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀνδράσι μόνοις ἁρμόττοντα· ἀλλὰ τὸ οἰκεῖον σημειουμένη, τοῦτο τήρει καὶ φύλαττε*.

44. See A. Basilikopoulou, Monachisme: l'égalité totale des sexes, in: *Les femmes et le monachisme byzantin* (as in footnote 1), 99-110.

more important in the case of nuns, often even the almost unique reference, as showed by A. Rigo[45]. Gennadios was no exception.

In his letter to Sophrosyne, Scholarios then summarised the "second form of worship", that is to say, everything that fell within the ascetic practices of the nun. This passage is worth quoting: "On the other hand about the second worship, I tell you briefly: do not strive to fast for the sake of abstinence from food and drink, but for the sake of restraint. Such restraint is to put it briefly: First, eat only once a day in the winter, and if possible all year round; Second, do not eat expensive food, but something cheap and easy to find; Thirdly, (eat) not to satiety; Fourth, (eat) without pleasure; Fifth, (eat) without hypocrisy; Sixth, do not overlook the love for God and for the neighbour for food preparation"[46].

Regarding fasting and genuflections[47], Gennadios did not set a specific standard to his spiritual daughter, but he advised her to regulate them based on her own strength[48]. Once again, the spirit of the rule had to override the letter: asceticism was regarded neither as an end in itself nor as a feat to achieve. It was much more meant to get closer not only to God but also to the neighbour – the latter was never forgotten in this advice.

In this letter and in chapter 31 of his treatise, Gennadios explained to Sophrosyne how she should pray[49]. Within his treatise he did not much emphasise on the prayer's form, giving more specific guidance in this regard

45. Rigo, Principes et canons (as in footnote 32), 171-179; cf. also the contribution of A. Rigo in this volume, 283-300.

46. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 234.26-235.4: *Περὶ δὲ τῆς δευτέρας λατρείας συντόμως σοι λέγω· νηστείαν μὴ σπούδαζε τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀποχῆς τῶν βρωμάτων ἢ πομάτων, ἀλλὰ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἐγκρατείας. Ἐγκράτεια δὲ τοιαύτη ἐστὶ συντόμως εἰπεῖν· Πρῶτον, ἐσθίειν ἅπαξ τῆς ἡμέρας ἐν τῷ χειμῶνι· εἰ δὲ δυνατόν, καὶ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ ἔτει· δεύτερον, μὴ ἐσθίειν πολυδάπανα ἀλλ' εὔωνα καὶ εὐπόριστα· τρίτον, μὴ εἰς κόρον· τέταρτον, μὴ μεθ' ἡδονῆς· πέμπτον, μὴ μεθ' ὑποκρίσεως· ἕκτον, μὴ ἀμελεῖν τῆς ὀφειλομένης τῷ Θεῷ ἀγάπης, ἢ τῷ πλησίον, διὰ τὴν τῆς τροφῆς ἑτοιμασίαν.*

47. *Ibidem*, 235.12-14.

48. James of Chalcedon gave the same kind of spiritual advice to his spiritual daughter in the end of the fourteenth century, see V. Laurent, La direction spirituelle des grandes dames à Byzance. La correspondance inédite d'un métropolite de Chalcédoine, *RÉB* 8 (1950), 64-84, here at 78-79. Antonio Rigo prepares a critical edition of this correspondence, a translation of which he has already published, see A. Rigo (ed.), *Mistici bizantini*, Torino 2008, 593-604, here at 598-599, 601, 603.

49. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.8-17; Gennadios Scholarios, *On the first service of God*, 258-259.

in his letter: "Let this be your prayer: 'my God, have mercy on me, a sinner, and save me'. Say these words as one prayer and repeat them again, sitting, standing and doing your manual work. And let your tongue say this prayer profusely, and let your intelligence (*διάνοια*) be consistent with your tongue, not aimless"[50]. Gennadios encouraged the nun to continuous prayer or "pure prayer", not to the hesychastic method, but not that far from it. He did not propose her any breathing techniques, he did not recommend that she should pray sitting rather than straight up, and did not suggest that she should say the Jesus prayer[51]. What Gennadios proposed was slightly different, it was an intermediary form of that prayer without the invocation to Jesus' name; nonetheless, the method of constant repetition was apparently part of the ascetic tradition. We should recall that the Metropolitan of Chalcedon, who kept up an extensive correspondence with the nun Eulogia, tried much more explicitly to discourage her from devoting herself to hesychastic practices, as he considered them dangerous: "Do not launch forth into the prayer of the heart, with a narrowed mind! Many people without this asceticism became great and miracle-working. Your own way, weak and powerless as you are, is rather that of greater simplicity and humility"[52].

Gennadios was also cautious. On the other hand, he appreciated his spiritual daughter's prayer so that in the end of his letter he asked her to pray for him.

Conclusions

Despite its shortness, the correspondence between Gennadios and Sophrosyne demonstrates how long lasting the Byzantine tradition of spiritual guidance for aristocratic nuns was. The living conditions of the nuns worsened after the

50. Gennadios Scholarios, *Letter to Sophrosyne*, 235.8-12: *Ἔστω σοι δὲ εὐχὴ αὕτη· ὁ Θεός μου, ἐλέησόν με τὴν ἁμαρτωλὸν καὶ σῶσόν με. Ταῦτα ὡς μίαν λέγε εὐχήν, καὶ πάλιν ἐπανέρχου καὶ καθημένη καὶ ἱσταμένη καὶ τὸ ἐργόχειρον πράττουσα. Καὶ ἡ μὲν γλῶττά σου βρυέτω ταύτην τὴν εὐχήν, ἡ δὲ διάνοιά σου ἀρεμβάστως συμφωνείτω τῇ γλώττῃ σου.*

51. The formula of Jesus prayer, which had become traditional in the fourteenth century and was recited by the hesychasts was: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner" (*Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐλέησόν με τὸν ἁμαρτωλόν*). About this formula, see the introduction by Olivier Clément in: O. CLÉMENT and J. TOURAILLE, *Philocalie des Pères neptiques*, Paris 1995, 24.

52. LAURENT, La direction spirituelle des grandes dames (as in footnote 48), 83; RIGO, *Mistici bizantini* (as in footnote 48), 599, and see also 602.

Fall of Constantinople, and the presence of a spiritual father, both physically and through letters, was scarce, but the monastic tradition was perpetuated. The advice given by Gennadios as a spiritual father remained in line with what is known about the fourteenth century. We can just emphasise his moderate recommendations and his concern for the sound Christian faith of the nun. As a spiritual father, Gennadios seemed not to be inclined to ascetical and mystical speech: he led his spiritual daughter towards traditional coenobitic monasticism and persuaded her to avoid any form of ascetic excess.

Ζήσης Μελισσακης*

Γυναίκες σε χειρόγραφα του Αγίου Όρους. Μία εξ αποστάσεως παρουσία σε ένα κόσμο άβατο

Η βάση της σχέσης των αθωνικών μονών με το γυναικείο φύλο προσδιορίζεται από την άρνηση εισόδου σε αυτές κάθε θηλυκού έμβιου όντος, το γνωστό «άβατο». Αν και η πρώτη επίσημη γραπτή σχετική απαγόρευση, και μάλιστα έμμεση, εμφανίζεται αρκετά αργά, το 1406, στο *Τυπικόν* του Μανουήλ Β' Παλαιολόγου, η αγιορειτική πολιτεία, ως αποκλειστικά ανδρική, ανέκαθεν απέκλειε την παρουσία σε αυτή κάθε γυναίκας, με το σκεπτικό ότι η μόνη που, κατά την παράδοση, είχε επισκεφθεί τον τόπο και μπορούσε να βρίσκεται εκεί, ως η κατεξοχήν προστάτις του, ήταν η Θεοτόκος[1]. Αυτή άλλωστε εμφανίζεται σε θρυλικές διηγήσεις περί εισόδου γυναικών στον Άθωνα να εμποδίζει τη συνέχιση της επίσκεψής τους -όπως της Galla Placidia και πολύ αργότερα της κόρης του Σέρβου ηγεμόνα Τζούρατζ Μπράνκοβιτς, Μάρας[2]. Όμως πέρα

---

* Ινστιτούτο Ιστορικών Ερευνών/Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών.

1. *Λάθοι γὰρ ἂν ἐντεῦθεν καὶ γυνὴ τῆς μονῆς ἐντὸς τολμήσασα εἰσελθεῖν εἰς ἄνδρα μετασχηματισθεῖσα καὶ τὸν εὐνοῦχον ἢ τὸν ἀγένειον ὑποκριναμένη. Μηδέποτε εὑρεθῆναι θῆλυ ζῶον τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους ἐντός, ... ἅπαξ γὰρ ἀπηγόρευται τοῦτο παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων ἐκείνων καὶ φιλαρέτων ἀνδρῶν ...*· Έγγραφο Πρωτάτου, 13 στ. 71-73, εκδ. D. Papachryssanthou, *Actes du Prôtaton. Texte* [Archives de l'Athos 7], Paris 1975, 260. Σύμφωνα με το παραπάνω χωρίο, αντίθετα προς την είσοδο γυναικών, η απαγόρευση της παρουσίας θηλυκών ζώων χρονολογείται από την ίδρυση της μοναστικής πολιτείας του Άθω.

2. Για την ιστορία του αθωνικού άβατου και των πραγματικών ή θρυλούμενων περιστατικών παραβίασής του, βλ. A.-M. Talbot, Women and Mt Athos, στο: *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March 1994*, εκδ. A. Bryer, M. Cunningham [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 4], Aldershot-Hampshire 1996, 67-70 (= A.-M. Talbot, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, IV). Για την ιστορία της εισόδου της Μάρα Μπράνκοβιτς, βλ. M. St. Popović, *Mara Branković. Eine Frau zwischen dem christlichen und dem islamischen Kulturkreis im 15. Jahrhundert* [Peleus 45], Wiesbaden 2010, (και σερβική μετάφραση, Beograd 2014), 144-146· Ν. Διονυσοπουλος,

από το άβατο –που άλλωστε ίσχυε σε κάθε ανδρώα μονή, αλλά εδώ αφορούσε σε μία ευρύτερη περιοχή–, η προσχώρηση στον μοναχισμό, και μάλιστα στον αθωνικό, ενός άνδρα σήμαινε πλήρη αποχωρισμό του από τις εξαρτώμενες από τον ίδιο συγγενείς του, όπως και πρακτικά προβλήματα επιβίωσης για αυτές, αν και συχνά σε ανάλογες περιπτώσεις γίνεται λόγος για το ενδιαφέρον του να τις εξασφαλίσει, οδηγώντας τις σε κάποια γυναικεία μονή[3].

Ωστόσο, αν και το άβατο αποτελούσε πάντα αξεπέραστο εμπόδιο για τη φυσική παρουσία γυναικών στον Άθωνα και ο εκεί μοναχισμός μοιάζει πάντα ξένος, αν όχι εχθρικός, προς αυτές –κανένας αγιορειτικός ναός, άλλωστε, δεν αφιερώνεται σε αγία γυναίκα, πλην της Θεοτόκου–, οι Αγιορείτες δεν αρνήθηκαν τη σημασία τους και την επικοινωνία με αυτές, ενώ δεν απέκλεισαν και την παρουσία στις μονές τους αντικειμένων κατασκευασμένων ή προερχόμενων από γυναίκες. Η παρούσα έρευνα στοχεύει στον εντοπισμό στο αθωνικό περιβάλλον, από τους πρώτους αιώνες του μέχρι τον δέκατο έκτο αιώνα, της γυναικείας «παρουσίας» –απλών ανθρώπων και όχι αγίων μορφών– μέσα από γραπτά κειμήλια και συγκεκριμένα χειρόγραφους κώδικες[4].

Το θέμα της σχέσης των γυναικών στο Βυζάντιο με το βιβλίο έχει μελετηθεί στο παρελθόν, αλλά σίγουρα όχι επαρκώς. Σε παλαιότερες ειδικές εργασίες του Σπυρίδωνος Λάμπρου, του Νίκου Βέη, εν μέρει και του Henri Omont, νεώτερες της Carla Casetti Brach και πρόσφατες της Annemarie Weyl Carr, του Peter Schreiner, του Φωκίωνα Κοτζαγεώργη και της Alice-Mary Talbot, (όπως και γενικότερου ενδιαφέροντος της Φλωρεντίας Ευαγγελάτου-Νοταρά και της Elisabeth Yota) έχουν συγκεντρωθεί μαρτυρίες για γυναίκες αντιγραφείς και

Πορτρέτα κοσμικών δωρητών στην εντοίχια ζωγραφική του Αγίου Όρους (14ος-αρχές 16ου αιώνα). Η ιστορική και η ιδεολογική διάσταση της εικονογραφίας του ορθόδοξου ηγεμόνα στο αθωνικό περιβάλλον. Διδακτορική διατριβή, Βόλος 2012, 183 σημ. 567, όπου και η σχετική βιβλιογραφία (http://thesis.ekt.gr/thesisBookReader/id/32125#page/190/mode/2up· τελευταία επίσκεψη 13-10-2016).

3. Βλ. λ.χ. το παράδειγμα του αθωνίτη οσίου Ευθυμίου του Νέου (823-898), ο οποίος φεύγοντας για να μονάσει άφησε τη χήρα μητέρα του, τις ανύπαντρες αδελφές του και την έγκυο σύζυγό του· *Βίος τοῦ ὁσίου Πατρὸς ἡμῶν Εὐθυμίου τοῦ ἐν Θεσσαλονίκῃ*, εκδ. L. Petit, Vie et office de Saint Euthyme le Jeune. *Texte grec*, *ROC* 8 (1903), 172-173 (5.1-6.15)· Talbot, Women and Mt Athos (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 2), 71.

4. Η αντίστοιχη έρευνα με βάση τα έγγραφα έχει ήδη πραγματοποιηθεί· Talbot, Women and Mt Athos (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 2), 72-79. Γενικά για τις δωρεές και ευεργεσίες γυναικών προς τις αθωνικές μονές βλ. S. S. Makuljević, Žene priložnice svetogorskih manastira u srednjem veku, στο: *Deveta kazivanja o Svetoj Gori*, <Beograd> 2016 171-206, 314-315 (ελληνική μετάφραση).

κατόχους-δωρήτριες κωδίκων, λιγότερο μέσα από μαρτυρίες κειμένων και περισσότερο από σημειώματα στα ίδια τα χειρόγραφα[5]. Ωστόσο λείπει ακόμη μία εξαντλητική συλλογή και επεξεργασία όλων των σχετικών πληροφοριών, καθώς και παλαιογραφική ανάλυση των κωδίκων που προήλθαν από γυναικεία χέρια. Πάντως από τα έως τώρα γνωστά στοιχεία γίνεται φανερό ότι η γυναικεία συμμετοχή στον κόσμο του βυζαντινού βιβλίου παρέμενε μάλλον περιορισμένη, αν και οι αναφορές σε γυναίκες λόγιες είναι πολλές[6].

5. H. Omont, Note sur un recueil de grammairiens latins, copié par une femme au Xe siècle, *CRAI* 49/1 (1905), 15-19 (γυναίκα γραφέας λατινικού χειρογράφου, αλλά το λατινικό κωδικογραφικό της σημείωμα είναι με ελληνικά γράμματα)· Σπ. Λαμπρος, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι καὶ κύριαι κωδίκων κατὰ τοὺς μέσους αἰῶνας καὶ ἐπὶ Τουρκοκρατίας, *Ἐπετηρὶς τοῦ Ἐθνικοῦ Πανεπιστημίου* 1 (1903), 229-264 (και ανάτυπο με ιδιαίτερη σελιδαρίθμηση, Ἀθήνα 1903)· N. A. Βεης, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι καὶ κυρίαι κωδίκων κατὰ τοὺς μέσους αἰῶνας καὶ ἐπὶ Τουρκοκρατίας, *Ποικίλον Ἡμερολόγιον Κατίνας Γ. Ἡλιακοπούλου* 1 (1905), 54-63 (και ανάτυπο με ιδιαίτερη σελιδαρίθμηση, Ἀθήνα 1905)· N. A. Βεης, Ἑλληνίδες κάτοχοι κωδίκων κατὰ τοὺς μέσους αἰῶνας, *Ποικίλον Ἡμερολόγιον Κατίνας Γ. Ἡλιακοπούλου* 2 (1906, εκδ. 1905), 250-256· <Σπ. Λαμπρος>, Ἡ βιβλιογράφος Εὐγενία, *NE* 3 (1906), 250-251· <Σπ. Λαμπρος>, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι καὶ κύριαι κωδίκων, *NE* 4 (1907), 377-378 (πρβλ. και 459-460)· <Σπ. Λαμπρος>, Ἑλληνίδες κύριαι κωδίκων, *NE* 7 (1910), 91-92· <Σπ. Λαμπρος>, Δύο Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι, *NE* 10 (1913), 347-348· C. Casetti Brach, Donne copiste nella leggenda di Bisanzio, *OCP* 41/2 (1975), 479-489· A. Weyl-Carr, Women and Monasticism in Byzantium: Introduction from an Art Historian, *BF* 9 (1985), 1-15, εδώ 5-7· P. Schreiner, Kopistinnen in Byzanz. Mit einer Anmerkung zur Schreiberin Eugenia im Par. Lat. 7560, *RSBN* 36 (1999), 35-45· P. P. Kotzageorgis, A Greek Woman Copyist from the 16th Century: Euphrosyne of Xanthi, *RÉB* 66 (2008), 233-240· A.-M. Talbot, Female Patronage in the Palaiologan Era: Icons, Minor Arts and Manuscripts, στο: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, εκδ. L. Theis, M. Mullett, M. Grünbart, G. Fingarova, M. Savage [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Wien-Köln-Weimar 2011/2012, 259-274 (βλ. 269-274)· Φλ. Ευαγγελατου-Νοταρα, *Σημειώματα ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων ὡς πηγὴ διὰ τὴν ἔρευναν τοῦ οἰκονομικοῦ καὶ κοινωνικοῦ βίου τοῦ Βυζαντίου ἀπὸ τοῦ 9ου αἰῶνος μέχρι τοῦ ἔτους 1204. Διατριβὴ ἐπὶ διδακτορίᾳ*, Ἀθήνα 1978· E. Yota, L'image du donateur dans les manuscrits illustrés byzantins, στο: *Donation et donateurs dans le monde byzantin. Actes du colloque international de l'Université de Fribourg 13-15 mars 2008*, εκδ. J.-M. Spieser, E. Yota [Réalités byzantines 14], Paris 2012, 265-292. Βλ. επίσης A. Weyl-Carr, A Note on Theodore Hagiopetrites, *Scriptorium* 35 (1981), 287-290· R. S. Nelson, *Theodore Hagiopetrites. A Late Byzantine Scribe and Illuminator* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 217. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik 4], Wien 1991, 122-123.

6. Στο *Repertorium der griechischen Kopisten* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik III/1-3], Wien 1981

Με βάση τις παραπάνω μελέτες, αλλά και έπειτα από έρευνα στους εκδεδομένους καταλόγους χειρογράφων των αγιορειτικών βιβλιοθηκών διαπιστώνουμε την ύπαρξη σε αυτές δεκάδων κωδίκων έως τον δέκατο έκτο αιώνα με σημειώματα στα οποία αναφέρονται γυναικεία ονόματα[7]. Από τα ευρήματα αυτά ασφαλώς εξαιρούνται όλα εκείνα από τα οποία απουσιάζει κάποια ρητή αναφορά σε εμπλοκή γυναίκας στην παραγωγή βιβλίου, σε κάποιου είδους κτήση ή σε δωρεά του[8]. Αντιθέτως παρουσιάζουν ενδιαφέρον τα χειρόγραφα

(= *RGK*), 1989, 1997 καταγράφεται μόνο μία γυναίκα γραφέας, ενώ στο *PLP* έξι· *RGK* 3, 85 (αρ. 206· Θεοδώρα Ραούλαινα Παλαιολογίνα, έτος 1240-1300 περ.)· *PLP* 1001 (Άννα μοναχή, 13ος αι.), 5971 (Ειρήνη, κόρη του κωδικογράφου Θεοδώρου Αγιοπετρίτου, έτος 1308-9), 10943 (Θεοδώρα Ραούλαινα Παλαιολογίνα), 16889 (Μαρία μοναχή, 13ος αι.), 26259 (Σμαράγδα, 15ος αι.) και 26388 (Σοφία, κόρη του Κοντοϊωάννη Ρίκου, έτος 1469). Στους παλαιότερους Marie Vogel και Victor Gardthausen εντοπίζονται δώδεκα ονόματα, από τα οποία όμως τα έξι (Ειρήνη Δούκαινα, Ευφροσύνη Πηγηνή, Ζωή, Καλή, Κασία και Μαρία βασίλισσα) με βεβαιότητα ή κατά πάσα πιθανότητα δεν αντιστοιχούν σε γραφείς, πέντε ταυτίζονται με λήμματα του *PLP* και μόνο ένα (Μαρία Κρουσαπούλα, έτος 1531) προστίθεται στον κατάλογο των γυναικών κωδικογράφων, επεκτείνοντάς τον όμως στον δέκατο έκτο αιώνα. M. Vogel, V. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* [Beiheft zum Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen 33], Leipzig 1909 (Hildesheim ²1966), 115, 123, 134-135, 225, 231, 235 σημ. 7, 287-288, 401. Γενικότερα για τη σχέση των γυναικών μοναχών με το βιβλίο κατά την Ύστερη Βυζαντινή περίοδο, βλ. A.-M. Talbot, Bluestocking Nuns: Intellectual Life in the Convents of Late Byzantium, στο: *Okeanos. Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, εκδ. C. Mango, O. Pritsak with the assistance of U. M. Pasicznyk = *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983), 604-618, κυρίως 605-606, 609-614 [= Η Ιδια, *Women and Religious Life* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 2), XVIII].

7. Στους καταλόγους που καταγράφονται από τον J.-M. Olivier, *Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs de Marcel Richard. Troisième édition entièrement refondue* [Corpus Christianorum], Turnhout 1995, 324-349 (αρ. 1093-1164) μπορούν να προστεθούν ακόμη μερικοί που εκδόθηκαν μετά το 1995 και έως σήμερα κυρίως για τις μονές Βατοπεδίου, Ιβήρων, Ξηροποτάμου, Σίμωνος Πέτρας, Σταυρονικήτα, Χιλανδαρίου, καθώς και της Σκήτης των Καυσοκαλυβίων· βλ. τώρα Ο Ιδιος, *Supplément au répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs* [Corpus Christianorum], Turnhout 2018, 473-551 (κυρίως αρ. 1122a, 1132a, 1132k, 1141a, 1141b, 1144z, 1151j, 1152a, 1162a). Ωστόσο το μεγαλύτερο μέρος του χειρόγραφου υλικού που περιγράφεται σε αυτούς είναι μεταβυζαντινό και δεν ενδιαφέρει την παρούσα μελέτη. Επίσης ορισμένα χειρόγραφα εντοπίζονται σε βιβλιοθήκες εκτός Αγίου Όρους, προερχόμενα όμως από αυτό.

8. Τέτοια είναι συνήθως χειρόγραφα, στα οποία σημειώθηκαν κάποια στιγμή γυναικεία ονόματα προς μνημόνευση ή ενθυμήσεις που αφορούν σε γυναίκες, όπως λ.χ. ο κώδικας *Ιβήρων 5*, στον οποίο γίνεται απλή μνεία του θανάτου κάποιας Μαρίας / μοναχής Μάρθας

που συνδέονται με σχέση αντιγραφής, κατοχής ή δωρεάς με μνημονευόμενες σε αυτά γυναίκες, ακόμη και αν δεν είμαστε βέβαιοι για την άμεση σχέση των τελευταίων με κάποια αθωνική μονή. Από την εξέταση των παραπάνω στοιχείων καταλήγουμε σε δεκαεπτά περίπου κώδικες, με τους οποίους θα ασχοληθούμε στη συνέχεια.

Οι περισσότεροι από τους τόμους αυτούς συνδέονται με επιφανείς γυναικείες μορφές. Πρώτος ο κώδικας της *Μονής Αγίου Παύλου 2* (Λάμπρος 129), που παραδίδει τις Πράξεις και τις Επιστολές των Αποστόλων (με ερμηνευτική Σειρά), καθώς και την Αποκάλυψη του Ιωάννου με ερμηνεία του Ανδρέα Καισαρείας, και στο τέλος του οποίου (φ. 429^{v}) αναγράφεται σύντομη ευχή για κάποια «βασίλισσα Μαρία» (*† σταυ/ρὲ / φύ/λαττε / βασίλισ/σαν / Μα/ρίαν· / †*[9]). Ο κώδικας είναι αρκετά γνωστός, καθώς ήδη από τον δέκατο ένατο αιώνα έγινε αντικείμενο μελέτης από πολλούς ερευνητές, οι οποίοι αναζητώντας την ταυτότητα της παραπάνω Μαρίας, διατύπωσαν διάφορες απόψεις για την ταυτότητά της[10]. Ως προς τη χρονολόγησή του, παλαιογραφικά και ιστορικά

το 1387 από τον γιο της, χωρίς κάποια ορατή σχέση της με τον δωρητή του τόμου Ιωάννη· Π. ΣΩΤΗΡΟΥΔΗΣ, *Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἰβήρων. Κατάλογος ἑλληνικῶν χειρογράφων. Τόμος Α' (1-100)*, Ἅγιον Ὄρος 1998, 9. Γενικά για τις δωρεές βιβλίων στο Βυζάντιο, βλ. Κ. ΜΑΥΡΟΜΜΑΤΙ, Ἐγράφη δι' ἐξόδου καὶ σπουδῆς καὶ ἀγάπης θέλοντος κτήσασθαι τοῦτο ... νῦν δὲ προστίθεται καὶ ἀφιεροῦται: Donating books in Byzantium (9th-15th century), στο: *Institution of Sponsorship, from Ancient to Modern Times. Proceedings of International Scientific Conference, Thessaloniki, February 7-8 2014*, εκδ. G. Kakavas [Papers and Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens 10], Αθήνα 2018, 167-182 (για δωρεές από γυναίκες βλ. 172, 173, 177).

9. Σπ. Π. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος τῶν ἐν ταῖς βιβλιοθήκαις τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους ἑλληνικῶν κωδίκων*, τόμ. Α', Cambridge 1895, ανατ. Amsterdam ²1966, 19. Φωτογραφία του σημειώματος στα: Ν. Δ. ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, *Ἡ βυζαντινὴ βασίλισσα Μαρία τοῦ χειρογράφου Ἁγ. Παύλου 2*, Αθήνα 2005, πίν. 2· ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (1903) (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 236 (8).

10. Ειδικότερα έχουν προταθεί ταυτίσεις με τη Μαρία τη Λακαπηνή (εγγονή του Ρωμανού Α' Λακαπηνού, 10ος αι.), τη Μαρία της Αλανίας (σύζυγο του Μιχαήλ Ζ' Δούκα και του Νικηφόρου Βοτανειάτη, 11ος-12ος αι.), με την πρώτη σύζυγο του Ιωάννη Τζιμισκή (10ος αι.), ενώ η παράδοση που συνοδεύει τον κώδικα, και ενισχύθηκε με κείμενα που προστέθηκαν σε αυτόν στο πρώτο μισό του 19ου αι., τον θέλει να έχει γραφεί και να ανήκει στη Μαρία *ἐξ Ἀμνίας* (σύζυγο του Κωνσταντίνου ς', τέλη 8ου-αρχές 9ου αι.). Πρόσφατα τις διάφορες πιθανές ταυτίσεις εξέτασε διεξοδικά η ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, *Βασίλισσα Μαρία* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 49-93, 130-198, η οποία κατέληξε σε ταύτιση με τη Μαρία της Αλανίας. Στο έργο αυτό παρουσιάζεται η προηγούμενη εκτενής βιβλιογραφία σχετικά με τον κώδικα.

δεδομένα επιβεβαιώνουν ότι είναι έργο του ενδέκατου αιώνα ενώ έχει πλέον αποδειχθεί ότι τα νεώτερα σημειώματα που φέρει, με λανθασμένες πληροφορίες για την ιστορία του, προέρχονται από τον μοναχό Ιάκωβο Νεασκητιώτη του δέκατου ένατου αιώνα[11]. Παράλληλα η παλαιότερη απόδοση του τόμου στο χέρι της Μαρίας δεν μπορεί πλέον να υποστηριχθεί, αφού το παραπάνω σημείωμα -το μόνο που φαίνεται σύγχρονο του χειρογράφου- δεν αναφέρει ρητά κάτι τέτοιο, αλλά, από την άλλη, η υψηλή ποιότητα της ύλης γραφής (περγαμηνή) και της διακόσμησης δείχνουν ότι πρόκειται σαφώς για πολυτελή τόμο που θα μπορούσε να έχει γραφεί για και/ή να ανήκει σε ένα μέλος της αριστοκρατίας, όπως ήταν η Μαρία, κάτι που προφανώς υπαινίσσεται το σημείωμα[12].

Στην προσπάθεια να ανιχνευθεί με μεγαλύτερη ακρίβεια η σχέση της Μαρίας με το χειρόγραφο πιστεύουμε ότι μπορούν να συμβάλουν ορισμένες κωδικολογικές παρατηρήσεις[13]. Η πρώτη αφορά στη σύνθεση του τόμου στο σημείο αυτό. Ειδικότερα διαπιστώσαμε ότι το φ. 429 είναι το πέμπτο -αλλά τελευταίο σωζόμενο- του τελευταίου τετραδίου του κώδικα, ενώ έχουν χαθεί τα υπόλοιπα τρία φύλλα του (βλ. σχήμα 1). Δεδομένου ότι το κείμενο του χειρογράφου δεν τελειώνει κολοβό, τα φύλλα αυτά υποθέτουμε ότι θα ήταν λευκά ή ενδεχομένως συνέχιζαν με άλλο κείμενο, κάτι λιγότερο πιθανό για το συγκεκριμένο είδος βιβλίου.

Ωστόσο μεγαλύτερη ίσως αξία έχει η παρατήρηση της χαράκωσης του φ. 429 και μάλιστα συγκριτικά με εκείνη των υπόλοιπων φύλλων του χειρογράφου. Σύμφωνα με το σύστημα κωδικοποίησης του Julien Leroy ο τύπος της χαράκωσης σε όλο τον κώδικα είναι B 79B1dx (βλ. σχήμα 2)[14]. Ιδιαίτερη σημασία έχει το

---

11. ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, *Βασίλισσα Μαρία* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 94-129.

12. Ο πρώτος που αμφισβήτησε την αντιγραφή του κώδικα από τη Μαρία, αλλά και την παλαιότερη χρονολόγησή του ήταν ο Α. ΠΑΠΑΔΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ-ΚΕΡΑΜΕΥΣ, Ἀνύπαρκτος κῶδιξ Μαρίας βασιλίσσης τοῦ 800-οῦ ἔτους, *BZ* 14 (1905), 260-270, ο οποίος έστρεψε τις υποψίες του στον γνωστό πλαστογράφο του δέκατου ένατου αιώνα Κωνσταντίνο Σιμωνίδη, μόνο για τα νεώτερα όμως σημειώματα του τόμου, χωρίς να αμφιβάλει για την αυθεντικότητα του βασικού.

13. Οι παρατηρήσεις αυτές αποτελούν προϊόν αυτοψίας που πραγματοποιήσαμε στον κώδικα. Ευχαριστούμε και από τη θέση αυτή τον ηγούμενο της Μονής Αγίου Παύλου αρχιμανδρίτη Παρθένιο, τον βιβλιοθηκάριο, πατέρα Νικόδημο, καθώς και τον πατέρα Άνθιμο για την άδεια, τη θερμή φιλοξενία και τη βοήθεια που μας παρείχαν.

14. Ασφαλώς η κωδικοποίηση αυτή δεν ενδείκνυται για χειρόγραφα με ερμηνευτική Σειρά, όπως το συγκεκριμένο· *Répertoire de réglures dans les manuscrits grecs sur parchemin. Base de données établie par* J.-H. SAUTEL *à l'aide du fichier* J. LEROY *et des catalogues récents à l'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes (CNRS)* [Bibliologia 13], Turnhout 1995,

γεγονός ότι για τα σχόλια στο άνω και κάτω περιθώριο χαράσσονται οριζόντιοι οδηγοί (*lignes rectrices*· τέσσερις στο άνω και πέντε στο κάτω) σε διπλάσια μεταξύ τους απόσταση από εκείνους για το κυρίως κείμενο κάθε φύλλου, αν και τελικά ανάμεσά τους γράφεται πάντα και μία επιπλέον σειρά σχόλια, η οποία φυσικά δεν ακολουθεί κάποιον χωριστό οδηγό, με αποτέλεσμα να έχουμε συνήθως -αλλά με πολλές εξαιρέσεις- έξι στίχους σχόλια στο άνω περιθώριο και δέκα στο κάτω. Κατ' εξαίρεση στο κάτω περιθώριο του φ. 429 χαράσσεται διπλάσιος αριθμός οδηγών (δέκα), των οποίων η έκταση, όμως, περιορίζεται αυστηρά μεταξύ των δύο εσωτερικών κάθετων γραμμών ορισμού του κυρίως κειμένου (*lignes de justification*), με άλλα λόγια οδηγοί που σαφώς προορίζονται για το σημείωμα με το όνομα της Μαρίας, αν και θα μπορούσαν να καλύψουν και κάποιο εκτενέστερο. Επιπλέον, και δεδομένου ότι το κείμενο του σημειώματος αυτού έχει σταυροειδές σχήμα, χαράχθηκε μία μικρή κάθετη γραμμή που ορίζει την αριστερή άκρη της οριζόντιας κεραίας του «σταυρού» του κειμένου (για την ακρίβεια την αρχή των δύο στίχων / *λαττε /βασίλισ*)[15]. Όλα αυτά δείχνουν ότι υπήρξε ειδική μέριμνα στη χάραξη του φ. 429, ώστε να γραφεί με κάθε επιμέλεια το σημείωμα για τη βασίλισσα. Όμως η χάραξη των επιπλέον γραμμών στο σημείο αυτό (και μάλιστα της κάθετης) είναι σαφώς πιο πρόχειρη από των υπολοίπων· διακρίνεται δύσκολα και δίνει την εντύπωση ότι δεν έγινε από την αρχή, μαζί με τις υπόλοιπες. Θα μπορούσε άραγε να αποτελεί αυτό ένδειξη ότι το σημείωμα προστέθηκε αργότερα στον κώδικα, όταν αυτός συνδέθηκε με τη Μαρία; Η γραφή του δείχνει να προέρχεται από το ίδιο χέρι που έγραψε και τον υπόλοιπο κώδικα, με την επιφύλαξη, όμως, ότι το μεγαλογράμματο *Β* στη λέξη *βασίλισσαν*, είναι πολύ σπάνιο στο υπόλοιπο κείμενο (βλ. λ.χ. τα σχόλια στο αριστερό περιθώριο του φ. 86^{v}), ενώ δεν συναντώνται καθόλου τα δύο μικρά διακοσμητικά στολίδια της αρχής και του τέλους του σημειώματος.

---

15 σημ. 28. Ωστόσο μπορούμε να την εφαρμόσουμε στην περίπτωσή μας, θεωρώντας και τις οριζόντιες γραμμές που χαράσσονται στο άνω και κάτω περιθώριο για τα σχόλια ως γραμμές περιθωρίου (*lignes marginales*) και όχι οδηγούς του κειμένου (*lignes rectrices*). Σε όλο τον κώδικα ακολουθείται το σύστημα χαράκωσης 1 (2121.2121) -το πλέον διαδεδομένο σε περγαμηνά χειρόγραφα-, δηλαδή η άμεση χαράξη σε κάθε εχέτριχο όψη των φύλλων· SAUTEL, LEROY, *Répertoire*, 31. Για τη χαράκωση του κώδικα, βλ. και ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, *Βασίλισσα Μαρία* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 110.

15. Κείμενα -ολοσέλιδα- σε σχήμα σταυρού γνωρίζουμε σε ελάχιστους κώδικες (όλους πολυτελείς), που φέρουν είτε κάποια φύλλα γραμμένα με τον τρόπο αυτό είτε σπανιότερα ολόκληρο το σώμα τους· Γ. ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Ἰβήρων. Εἰκονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα*, Ἅγιον Ὄρος 2000, 45 και 124 σημ. 55.

Αν όμως το σημείωμα είναι εξαιρετικά σύντομο, φειδωλό σε πληροφορίες και δεν καταδεικνύει με ασφάλεια τη σχέση του τόμου με τη βασίλισσα Μαρία, είναι σημαντικό ότι στην αγιορειτική παράδοση αυτός ενσωματώθηκε ως αυτοκρατορικό έργο και μάλιστα ο Γεράσιμος Σμυρνάκης το συνδέει με τον ιδρυτή της Μονής Αγίου Παύλου, Παύλο τον Ξηροποταμηνό, στον οποίο θα προσφέρθηκε ο τόμος από τη Μαρία τη Λακαπηνή[16]. Είναι συνεπώς προφανές ότι στη σκέψη των Αθωνιτών αυτό που προείχε δεν ήταν η σχέση του κώδικα με μία γυναίκα, αλλά η υψηλή προέλευσή του, καύχημα -έμμεσα ίσως και όφελος- για τους Αγιοπαυλίτες[17].

Ο δεύτερος κώδικας (*Παντοκράτορος 6* [Λάμπρος 1040]· λόγοι και εγκώμια σε διάφορες εορτές· αρχές δέκατου τέταρτου αιώνα) συνδέεται σαφώς με μέλος της αριστοκρατίας, καθώς στο φ. 3^{v} φέρει ένα εκτενέστατο και λεπτομερές αχρονολόγητο σημείωμα, στο οποίο μεταξύ άλλων αναφέρεται ότι ... *ἐφιλοπονήθη ... καὶ ἐσπουδάσθη συντεθῆναί τε καὶ γραφῆναι ... παρὰ τῆς ... ἀϊδήμου κτητορίσσης κυρᾶς Ἄννας Κομνηνῆς Ῥαουλαίνης τῆς Στρατηγοπουλίνας καὶ πρωτοστρατορίσης τῆς διὰ τοῦ θείου καὶ ἀγγελικοῦ σχήματος μετονομασθείσης Ἀντωνίας μοναχῆς καὶ προσετέθη δὲ καὶ ἀφιερώθη μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν ὧν κατὰ καιροὺς πεποίηκε βίβλων τε καὶ παντοδαπῶν σκευῶν καὶ ἱερῶν κειμηλίων ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ σεβασμίᾳ καὶ εὐαγεστάτῃ μονῇ τοῦ Κραταιοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ψυχικῆς ἕνεκα σωτηρίας αὐτῆς*[18]. Στην περίπτωση

16. Γ. ΣΜΥΡΝΑΚΗΣ, *Τὸ Ἅγιον Ὄρος. Πρόλογος* Δ. ΠΑΠΑΧΡΥΣΑΝΘΟΥ, *Εὑρετήριο* Ι. ΤΑΒΛΑΚΗΣ, Καρυὲς Ἁγίου Ὄρους ^{2}1988 (Ἀθήνα ^{1}1903), 601-602· ΠΑΠΑΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ, *Βασίλισσα Μαρία* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 95-96.

17. Σε μία αντίστοιχη περίπτωση η αγιορειτική παράδοση, δέχθηκε ένα Ψαλτήριο (*Μ. Διονυσίου olim 761* [Κουρίλας 446]) ως έργο της αγίας Ματρώνας -άγνωστο ποιάς ακριβώς-, χωρίς την ύπαρξη κάποιου σχετικού σημειώματος σε αυτό· Ε. ΚΟΥΡΙΛΑΣ ΛΑΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ, Κατάλογος αγιορειτικῶν χειρογράφων, *Θεολογία* 14 (1936), 330-347, εδώ 333· CASETTI BRACH, Donne (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 488-489. Στην περίπτωση αυτή όμως, ελλείψει κάποιας γραπτής ιστορικής πηγής που να στηρίζει τη σχετική παράδοση, ο κώδικας παραμένει απλώς στην κατηγορία των ιερών κειμηλίων.

18. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 92-94· ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (1903) (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 245-247 (17-19)· TALBOT, Female Patronage (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 271-272. Είναι ενδιαφέρον ότι το σημείωμα τελειώνει με αναφορά στις δυσκολίες εξεύρεσης των περιεχομένων στον τόμο κειμένων (... *πλείονα δὲ ὑπομεμενηκότες μόχθον τε καὶ ταλαιπωρίαν περὶ τὴν τῆς ὅλης πραγματείας συλλογὴν καὶ συνάθροισιν, ἄλλον ἀλλαχόθεν ἐρανιζόμενοι λόγον καὶ ἑτέρωθεν αἰτοῦντες βιβλίον*) και με μία μάλλον γυναικεία επισήμανση να μη χρησιμοποιείται με λερωμένα χέρια. Για την Άννα Κομνηνή Ραούλαινα, εκτός από τα σχόλια του Σπ. Λάμπρου (Ελληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (1903), βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5, 247 [19]), βλ. *PLP* 26893.

αυτή ο κώδικας γράφηκε με μέριμνα μιας εξέχουσας γυναίκας -όχι από την ίδια-, η οποία όμως τον αφιέρωσε σε γυναικεία μονή της Κωνσταντινούπολης που είχε ιδρύσει η ίδια, για να φθάσει αργότερα στο Άγιον Όρος, άγνωστο πώς, αλλά πιθανότατα ως δωρεά από μέλος της βυζαντινής αριστοκρατίας, όπως συμβαίνει και με άλλους κώδικες των αθωνικών μονών[19]. Εδώ πλέον το σαφές σημείωμα δεν άφησε χώρο στην αγιορειτική παράδοση να συνδέσει τον κώδικα με την ιστορία της Μονής Παντοκράτορος, παρόλο που η παραπλήσια με αυτής ονομασία της μονής, στην οποία δωρήθηκε αρχικά, θα μπορούσε να προσφέρει την απαραίτητη βάση.

Αντιθέτως, ένα άλλο μέλος της οικογενείας των Ραούλ, η λόγια αντιγραφέας και βιβλιόφιλος Θεοδώρα Ραούλαινα Παλαιολογίνα (περ. 1240-1290), ανηψιά του Μιχαήλ Η' Παλαιολόγου και ενδεχομένως μητέρα της προαναφερθείσας Άννας Κομνηνής, αφιέρωσε για ψυχική της σωτηρία απευθείας στη Μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας ένα ιστορημένο χειρόγραφο με την ερμηνεία του Θεοφύλακτου Βουλγαρίας στα Ευαγγέλια (σήμερα *Par. Coisl. 128*· 12ος-13ος αι.[20]). Η αφιέρωση της Θεοδώρας, της οποίας γνωρίζουμε και άλλες τέτοιες

19. Το ότι η Μονή του Κραταιού Σωτήρος Χριστού ήταν γυναικεία προκύπτει τόσο από την ίδρυσή της από γυναίκα, όσο και από το ίδιο το σημείωμα (*Ἀξιοῦμεν οὖν τοὺς τὴν τοιαύτην ἐντυγχάνοντας ἱερὰν βίβλον καὶ μάλιστα ταῖς ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ σεβασμίᾳ μονῇ ἐνασκουμέναις εὐλαβεστάταις μοναχαῖς* ...). Η πιο γνωστή περίπτωση τέτοιας δωρεάς στο Άγιον Όρος είναι αυτή των κωδίκων του αυτοκράτορα Ιωάννη Ϛ' Καντακουζηνού στη Μονή Βατοπεδίου· Ε. ΛΑΜΠΕΡΤΣ, Ἡ βιβλιοθήκη καὶ τὰ χειρόγραφά της, στο: *Ἱερὰ Μεγίστη Μονὴ Βατοπαιδίου. Παράδοση-ἱστορία-τέχνη*, τόμ. Β', Ἅγιον Ὄρος 1996, 568-569. Ανάλογες δωρεές σε γυναικείες μονές αναφέρει η TALBOT, Bluestocking Nuns (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 6), 610 σημ. 29, η οποία εξετάζει την περίπτωση του *Παντοκράτορος 6* στο πλαίσιο της έρευνάς της γύρω από τις βιβλιοθήκες των γυναικείων μονών.

20. R. DEVREESSE, *Le fonds Coislin* [Bibliothèque nationale. Département des manuscrits. Catalogue des manuscrits grecs, 2], Paris 1945, 122· J. DUPLACY, Manuscrits grecs du Nouveau Testament émigrés de la Grande Laura de l'Athos, στο: *Studia codicologica*, εκδ. K. TREU, J. DUMMER, J. IRMSCHER, F. PASCHKE [TU 124], Berlin 1977, 172-173. Για τη Θεοδώρα και τα βιβλία της, βλ.: ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Δύο Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 347-348· SCHREINER, Kopistinnen (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 37-38· TALBOT, Female Patronage (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 272· *PLP* 10943· *RGK* 3, 85 (αρ. 206)· TALBOT, Bluestocking Nuns (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 6), 611-612 (πληροφορίες για τη βιβλιοθήκη της)· NELSON, *Hagiopetrites* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 34, 50 και σημ. 48. Βλ. και S. KUGÉAS, Zur Geschichte der Münchener Thukydideshandschrift Augustanus F, *BZ* 16 (1907), 589-609· YOTA, L'image (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 268 και σημ. 26· F. RIZZO NERVO, Teodora Raoulena: tra agiografia e politica, στο: *Σύνδεσμος. Studi in onore di Rosario Anastasi*, τόμ. 1, Catania 1991, 147-161 (για το συγγραφικό της έργο).

δωρεές, και μάλιστα προς λόγιους, όπως ο Μάξιμος Πλανούδης, μνημονεύεται άμεσα ή έμμεσα σε τρία σημειώματα του κώδικα:

α) φ. 344ᵛ: *Ῥαουλλέν(ης) / εὔξασθε οἱ / ἐν τ(ῇ) Λαύρα:*.

β) φ. 345ʳ: *βιβλίον τ(ῆς) ια / θέ(σεως) / † ἐδόθ(η) εἰς τὴν ἁγ(ίαν) λαύραν / τοῦ ὁσ(ίου) π(ατ)ρ(ὸ)ς ἡμῶν Ἀθανασίου / παρὰ τ(ῆς) ἀ[[ει]]ημνήσ[[τ]]θου Θεοδώρ(ας) / τ(ῆς) πρωτοβεστ(ια)ρ(ίσσης) ἔτ(ους) ,ςωθ' / ἰν(δικτιῶνος) ιδ* (= ἔτος 1300/1301).

γ) φ. 345ᵛ (μεταγενέστερο έμμετρο σημείωμα): *† ἡ βίβλος αὕτη τῶν κατιχουμ(εν)εί(ων) / τῆς ἱερᾶς πέφυκε (καὶ) θείας Λαύρας: / μνημοσύνης δὲ τῆς δεδωκυίας ταύτην, / καὶ τῆς ψυχικῆς ἕνεκα σ(ωτη)ρίας, / οἱ π(ατέ)ρες εὔχεσθε τῆς Ῥαουλένης: / Δοσίθεος ταῦτ εἶπε μοναχοθύτης. / οἰκτρὸς χθαμαλὸς ἀλιτρὸς ῥακενδύτης· / ἔτι παροικῶν ἐνταυθοῖ κ(αὶ) μὴ θέλων / βία συνεχόμενος βουλαῖς π(ατέ)ρων: / μάρτυς ὁ Θ(εό)ς, τὴν ἀλήθειαν λέγω: / ἔτ(ους) ,ςϡξγ:* (= ἔτος 1455)[21].

Η ίδια μονή κατείχε ένα ακόμη χειρόγραφο της Θεοδώρας, αυτή τη φορά γραμμένο από την ίδια. Πρόκειται για τον *Mosqu. Mus. Hist.* (GIM, *Mus. sobr.*) *3649* (Σχόλια του Συμπλικίου στα Φυσικά του Αριστοτέλους, έτος 1282 περίπου), ο οποίος, όπως απέδειξε ο B. Fonkič, μεταφέρθηκε από τη Μονή στη Μόσχα το 1835 από τον V. Orlov-Davydov[22]. Αν και ο κώδικας αυτός προστίθεται σε εκείνους που κατείχαν γυναίκες και κατόπιν βρέθηκαν σε αθωνικές μονές, δεν διαθέτουμε καμία πληροφορία για τον τρόπο με τον οποίο έφθασε στη Λαύρα.

Και πάλι η Θεοδώρα Ραούλαινα, σύμφωνα με υπόθεση των Hugo Buchthal και Hans Belting, ενδέχεται να παρήγγειλε την κατασκευή και μιας ομάδας δεκαπέντε πολυτελώς διακοσμημένων λειτουργικών αυτή τη φορά χειρογράφων που προέρχονται από το λεγόμενο «Atelier of the Palaeologina»[23].

---

21. Η μεταγραφή των σημειωμάτων προέρχεται από αυτοψία. Βλ. και B. de Montfaucon, *Bibliotheca Coisliana olim Segueriana*, ..., Paris 1715, 201. Φωτογραφία του σημειώματος του φ. 345ʳ στο Nelson, *Hagiopetrites* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), Plates, pl. 83.

22. B. L. Fonkič, Grečeskie rukopisi V. P. Orlova-Davydova, *VV* 44 (1983), 117-125, εδώ 120-121 (κώδικας αρ. 8· έκδοση του κωδικογραφικού του σημειώματος), 123 και 125· Ο Ιδιος, Zametki o grečeskih rukopisjah sovetskih hranilišč. 1. Moskovskij avtograf Feodory Rauleny, *VV* 36 (1974), 134-138, εδώ 134, πίν. 1. Από το χέρι της Θεοδώρας προέρχεται και ολόκληρος ο *Vat. gr. 1899*· P. Canart, *Codices vaticani graeci. Codices 1745-1962*, vol. I: *Codicum enarrationes*, Città del Vaticano 1970, 578-581 (βλ. κυρίως 580-581), τόμ. Β'. *Introductio, addenda, indices*, Bibliotheca Vaticana 1973, LVII-LVIII.

23. H. Buchthal, H. Belting, *Patronage in Thirteenth-Century Constantinople. An Atelier of Late Byzantine Book Illumination and Calligraphy* [DOS 16], Washington, D.C.

Πέντε από τα χειρόγραφα αυτά φυλάσσονται σε αγιορειτικές βιβλιοθήκες και, συνεπώς, εάν η παραπάνω υπόθεση είναι ορθή, τότε δεν αποκλείεται η Θεοδώρα να δώρισε απευθείας σε αυτές τους συγκεκριμένους τόμους[24]. Συγκεκριμένα πρόκειται για τους κώδικες:

α) *Διονυσίου 5* (Λάμπρος 3539· Τετραευαγγέλιο, 14ος αι.) και *Petrop. RNB, Φ. 906 gr. 302* (ένα φύλλο αποσπασμένο από τον κώδικα από τον Πορφύριο Ουσπένσκι)[25]

β) *Ιβήρων 30μ* (Ευαγγελιστάριο, 13ος-14ος αι.)[26]

γ) *Λαύρας Α 2* (Ευστρατιάδης αρ. 2· Τετραευαγγέλιο, 13ος αι.)[27]

δ) *Σταυρονικήτα 27* (Λάμπρος 892· Ευαγγελιστάριο, β' μισό 13ου αι.)[28]

ε) *Σταυρονικήτα 46* (Λάμπρος 911· Ψαλτήριο, β' μισό 13ου αι.)[29].

Ωστόσο ελλείψει βεβαιότητας για τη σχέση των χειρογράφων αυτών με τη Θεοδώρα, μπορούμε απλώς να τους προσθέσουμε στη λίστα με τους κώδικες που συνδέονται με γυναίκες και κάποτε βρέθηκαν στον Άθωνα.

1978, 100, 105-121 (κατάλογος των κωδίκων της ομάδας, εκτός ενός, το 1940 σε ιδιωτική συλλογή της Νέας Υόρκης, αλλά αργότερα σε άγνωστο κάτοχο). Στους δεκαπέντε τόμους αργότερα προστέθηκαν και άλλοι, κανείς όμως από το Άγιον Όρος, ενώ άλλοι ερευνητές εργάστηκαν επάνω στο θέμα θέτοντάς το σε νέες βάσεις· βλ. TALBOT, Female Patronage (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 269-270. Παλαιογραφική ανάλυση των κωδίκων από τον G. PRATO, Scritture librarie arcaizzanti della prima età dei Paleologi e loro modelli, *Scrittura e Civiltà* 3 (1979), 156-165 (= Ο ΙΔΙΟΣ, *Studi di Paleografia greca* [Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo. Collectanea 4], Spoleto 1994, 78-87).

24. TALBOT, Bluestocking Nuns (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 6), 611-612· BUCHTHAL, BELTING, *Patronage* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 23), 105-109, πίν. 31, 34-37, 49-55.

25. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Α', 319· Ε. È. GRANSTREM, Katalog grečeskih rukopisej leningradskih hranilišč. Vypusk 4. Rukopisi XII veka, *VV* 23 (1963), 166-204, εδώ 191 (αρ. 365).

26. Σ. Μ. ΠΕΛΕΚΑΝΙΔΗΣ, Π. Κ. ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ, Χ. ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, Σ. Ν. ΚΑΔΑΣ, *Οἱ θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους. Σειρὰ Α'. Εἰκονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Παραστάσεις-Ἐπίτιτλα-Ἀρχικὰ γράμματα*, τόμ. Β', Άθήνα 1975, 329, εικ. 149-150.

27. ΣΠ. ΛΑΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ, Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ, *Κατάλογος τῶν κωδίκων τῆς Μεγίστης Λαύρας τῆς ἐν Ἁγίῳ Ὄρει* [Harvard Theological Studies 12 / Ἁγιορειτικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη 2-3], Cambridge Mass.-Paris 1925, 1.

28. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 76· Χ. ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, Γ. ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Ἱερὰ Μονὴ Σταυρονικήτα. Εἰκονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Ἀπὸ τὸν 10ο ἕως τὸν 17ο αἰῶνα*, τόμ. Α', Άγιον Όρος 2008, 106-111, τόμ. Β', Άγιον Όρος 2007, 171-181 (φωτογραφίες).

29. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), 78· ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Μονὴ Σταυρονικήτα*, τόμ. Α', 111-120, τόμ. Β', 183-215 (φωτογραφίες).

Μία άλλη εξέχουσα γυναίκα της εποχής των Παλαιολόγων, η αυτοκράτειρα Ειρήνη -είτε η Γιολάντα Μομφερρατική δεύτερη σύζυγος του Ανδρονίκου Β', είτε η εξ Αλαμανών πρώτη σύζυγος του Ανδρονίκου Γ',- φέρεται να δώρισε στη Μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας τον κώδικα *Λαύρας Α 111* (Ευστρατιάδης 111· Ευαγγελιστάριο, τέλη 13ου-αρχές 14ου αι.), σύμφωνα με σημείωμα στο φ. 401ᵛ-402ʳ του τόμου[30]. Ωστόσο στο τέλος του σημειώματος -σε κείμενο από άλλο χέρι- εμφανίζεται και κάποιος Δημήτριος που αιτήθηκε τον κώδικα (*οἱ πατέρες μέμνησθε τοῦ Δημητρίου τοῦ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον αἰτησαμένου*). Με βάση το ύφος του σημειώματος πιστεύουμε ότι ο Δημήτριος είναι και γραφέας του τελευταίου τμήματος του σημειώματος, ενώ πρέπει να ήταν και Λαυριώτης ή πάντως να συνδεόταν με κάποιο τρόπο τη Μονή[31]. Εάν αυτό είναι ορθό, τότε στην περίπτωση αυτή έχουμε μία γυναικεία αυτοκρατορική δωρεά χειρογράφου, αλλά έπειτα από αίτηση των Αγιορειτών.

Την εποχή των Παλαιολόγων επίσης η χήρα του Ανδρονίκου Γ', Άννα της Σαβοΐας ίσως αφιέρωσε στη μονή Ιβήρων ένα πολυτελές Ψαλτήριο, αφού κάλυψε τα έξοδά του ως ευχαριστία (*σῶστρον*) δική της και του γιού της, σύμφωνα με το έμμετρο σημείωμα στο φ. 262ᵛ (265ᵛ) του κώδικα (*Ιβήρων 1384* [Λάμπρος 5504]· Ψαλτήριο, έτος 1345/6[32]). Στο σημείωμα δεν γίνεται καθόλου λόγος για αφιέρωση του τόμου και μάλιστα στη Μονή Ιβήρων. Ωστόσο, κατά τη Φλωρεντία Νοταρά, η φροντίδα της Άννας για την κατασκευή του πρέπει να συνδέεται με το τέλος του εμφυλίου πολέμου και τη δολοφονία του Αλεξίου Απόκαυκου, ενώ η χρήση του όρου *σῶστρον* φανερώνει ότι πιθανότατα η ευχαριστία απευθύνθηκε σε κάποια εικόνα της Θεοτόκου, μάλλον της Πορταΐτισσας στη Μονή Ιβήρων. Ενδιαφέρον είναι ότι ο κώδικας είναι έργο του γνωστού αντιγραφέα Χαρίτωνα της Μονής Οδηγών, του κατ' εξοχήν

30. ΛΑΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ, ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 27), 11. Το σημείωμα εκδίδεται από τους Σ. Μ. ΠΕΛΕΚΑΝΙΔΗ, Π. Κ. ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ, Χ. ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, Σ. Ν. ΚΑΔΑ, Α. ΚΑΤΣΑΡΟΥ, *Οἱ θησαυροὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὄρους. Σειρὰ Α'. Εἰκονογραφημένα χειρόγραφα. Παραστάσεις-Ἐπίτιτλα-Ἀρχικὰ γράμματα*, τόμ. Γ', Αθήνα 1979, 234 (234-235: περιγραφή του κώδικα· βλ. και εικ. 50-55)· TALBOT, Female Patronage (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 272-273. Για την ταυτότητα της Ειρήνης, βλ. NELSON, *Hagiopetrites* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 50-51.

31. Υποθέσεις για την ταυτότητα του Δημητρίου στο: NELSON, *Hagiopetrites* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 49 σημ. 44.

32. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Β', 279 (με έκδοση του σημειώματος)· ΠΕΛΕΚΑΝΙΔΗΣ, ΧΡΗΣΤΟΥ, ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, ΚΑΔΑΣ, *Οἱ θησαυροὶ* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 26), τόμ. Β', 328-329 (νέα έκδοση του σημειώματος), 97 (εικ. 147-148)· ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Μονὴ Ἰβήρων* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 15), 84-85, 88-89 (εικ. 57-58).

αντιγραφικού κέντρο της Κωνσταντινούπολης εκείνη την εποχή, το οποίο συνδεόταν με την αριστοκρατία[33].

Μία βασίλισσα από τη Σερβία, η χήρα του Στεφάνου Δουσάν, Ελένη (ή Γέλενα, μετέπειτα μοναχή Ελισάβετ) συνδέεται επίσης μέσω ελληνικών χειρογράφων με το Άγιον Όρος, χωρίς όμως να φαίνεται να τους δώρισε σε κάποια αθωνική μονή[34]. Η Ελένη -και ο πνευματικός της πατήρ ιερομόναχος Δωρόθεος- στράφηκε στο Όρος, και συγκεκριμένα στον κουτλουμουσιανό ιερομόναχο γραφέα Ιερεμία (1356-1371), για να του αναθέσει την αντιγραφή με έξοδά της ορισμένων λειτουργικών κωδίκων, τουλάχιστον δύο από τους οποίους κατέληξαν στις αρχές του εικοστού αιώνα στην Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδος (ΕΒΕ), προερχόμενοι από τη βιβλιοθήκη του Γυμνασίου Θεσσαλονίκης. Πρόκειται για τους *ΕΒΕ 2004* (Συναξάριο Μαρτίου-Αυγούστου· μεταξύ των ετών 1360 και 1371) και *ΕΒΕ 2049* (Μηναίο Απριλίου· β' μισό 14ου αι.), οι οποίοι φέρουν σημειώματα που μαρτυρούν την παραγγελία αυτή (*ΕΒΕ 2004*, φ. 206^{v}, 285^{v}, 440^{v} και 2049, φ. 76^{r}, 125^{v})[35]. Από τον ίδιο γραφέα προέρχονται και οι *ΕΒΕ 2035* (Μηναίο Φεβρουαρίου· β' μισό 14ου αι.) και *ΕΒΕ 2422* (Μηναίο Αυγούστου· 14ος αι.), που έφθασαν στην Αθήνα επίσης από το Γυμνάσιο Θεσσαλονίκης -ο πρώτος- και από τη Μονή Προδρόμου Σερρών ο δεύτερος, αλλά δεν φέρουν σημειώματα που να τους εντάσσουν με βεβαιότητα στην παραγγελία της Ελένης[36]. Ωστόσο στην ίδια ομάδα κωδίκων του γραφέα της Ελισάβετ προστίθενται και ορισμένοι από μονές του Αγίου Όρους, οι *Διονυσίου*

33. Φλ. Ευαγγελατου-Νοταρα, *Χορηγοί - κτήτορες - δωρητές σε σημειώματα κωδίκων. Παλαιολόγειοι χρόνοι* [Περιοδικό «Παρουσία». Παράρτημα 49], Αθήνα 2000, 104-105. Βλ. και Talbot, Female Patronage (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 273 και σημ. 55, όπου ανασκευάζονται οι υποθέσεις περί δωρεάς του τόμου στη Μ. Ιβήρων από την Άννα.

34. Για τη σχέση της Ελένης με το Άγιον Όρος, βλ. Makuljević, Žene priložnice (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 4), 184-186.

35. Σύμφωνα με το σημείωμα του *ΕΒΕ 2004*, φ. 440^{v}, η παραγγελία περιελάμβανε και άλλους τόμους (συνολικά έξι Μηναία, ένα Συναξάριο και τρία Τριώδια), τα οποία σήμερα αγνοούνται.

36. Λ. Πολιτης, *Κατάλογος χειρογράφων τῆς Ἐθνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἀρ. 1857-2500, με τη συνεργασία Μ. Πολιτη* [Πραγματεῖαι τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν 54], Αθήνα 1991, 72, 88, 96, 421-422. Το θέμα μελέτησε διεξοδικά ο Λίνος Πολίτης· L. Politis, Griechische Handschriften der serbischen Kaiserin Elisabeth, *BSl* 2 (1930), 288-304 (= Ο Ιδιος, *Paléographie et littérature byzantine et néo-grecque. Recueil d'études. Préface de* D. Zakythinos [Variorum Reprints], London 1975, αρ. I)· L. Politis, Paläographische Miszellen vom heiligen Berg, *BZ* 50 (1957), 312-316 (= Ο Ιδιος, *Paléographie*, αρ. V). Βλ. και Ευαγγελατου-Νοταρα, *Χορηγοί* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 33), 87.

311 (Λάμπρος 3845· Τετραευαγγέλιο, β' μισό 14ου αι.) και *Κουτλουμουσίου 324* (Λάμπρος 3397· Μηναίο Μαρτίου), που επίσης δεν φέρουν σημειώματα που να αποδεικνύουν ότι παραγγέλθηκαν από τη χήρα του Δουσάν[37].

Τέλος ο ίδιος Ιερεμίας το 1397 φαίνεται ότι αντέγραψε και ένα ακόμη Συναξάριο Μαρτίου-Αυγούστου (*Ξηροποτάμου 234* [Λάμπρος 2567]) με έξοδα μιας Δούκαινας Φιλανθρωπινής, της οποίας το όνομα δεν σώζεται ολόκληρο στο σχετικό σημείωμα[38]. Στην περίπτωση αυτή όμως η παραγγελία μάλλον προοριζόταν για το Άγιον Όρος. Γενικά την εποχή αυτή ο Άθως βρίσκεται στη σερβική επικράτεια και οι Σέρβοι ηγεμόνες τον ευεργετούν, μάλλον για να πετύχουν αναγνώριση και νομιμοποίηση της εξουσίας τους. Οι Σέρβοι αγιορείτες αυξάνονται, ενώ φθάνουν και στις υψηλότερες θέσεις της αθωνικής διοίκησης. Στο εξής και άλλες γυναίκες της σερβικής αριστοκρατίας (όπως η λόγια Ελένη-μοναχή Ευφημία, σύζυγος του Ιωάννη Ούγκλεση, και τον δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα η Μάρα Μπράνκοβιτς) θα ευεργετήσουν τις αθωνικές μονές - κυρίως Χιλανδαρίου και Αγίου Παύλου– με δωρεές πολυτελών αντικειμένων[39]. Όσο πάντως και αν πίσω από αυτές τις δωρεές υπάρχουν και πολιτικά κίνητρα, πιστεύω ότι μάλλον πρέπει να δεχθούμε και προσωπικούς λόγους (ψυχική σωτηρία).

Εκτός από αυτές τις επιφανείς γυναικείες μορφές, γνωρίζουμε και άλλες περισσότερο ταπεινές που συνδέθηκαν με αθωνικές μονές μέσω κωδίκων. Συγκριτικά με τις πρώτες είναι πολύ λιγότερες, γεγονός που στην περίπτωση τουλάχιστον των δωρητριών ερμηνεύεται από το υψηλό κόστος του βυζαντινού βιβλίου[40]. Σε σημείωμα στο φ. 186^{v} του εικονογραφημένου Τετραευαγγελίου

37. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Α', 409, 310· POLITIS, Paläographische Miszellen, 312-315 και εικ. 4-5.

38. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Α', 217· ΕΥΔ. ΞΗΡΟΠΟΤΑΜΗΝΟΣ, *Κατάλογος ἀναλυτικὸς τῶν χειρογράφων κωδίκων τῆς βιβλιοθήκης τῆς ἐν Ἁγίῳ Ὄρει τοῦ Ἄθω ἱερᾶς καὶ σεβασμίας βασιλικῆς, πατριαρχικῆς καὶ σταυροπηγιακῆς Μονῆς τοῦ Ξηροποτάμου*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1932, 116· POLITIS, Paläographische Miszellen (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 35), 315 και εικ. 6-7.

39. POPOVIĆ, *Mara Branković* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 2), 134-164. Για τις σερβικές αυτές ευεργεσίες βλ. MAKULJEVIĆ, Žene priložnice (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 4), 186-195.

40. Για τη χρηματική αξία των χειρογράφων, βλ. V. KRAVARI, Note sur le prix des manuscrits (IX^{e}-XV^{e} siècle), στο: *Hommes et richesses dans l'Empire byzantin*, εκδ. V. KRAVARI, J. LEFORT, C. MORRISSON, τόμ. Β': *VIII^{e}-XV^{e} siècle* [Réalités byzantines 3], Paris <1991>, 373-384· P. SCHREINER, Kosten der Handschriftenherstellung in Byzanz, στο: *Buch- und Bibliothekswissenschaft im Informationszeitalter. Internationale Festschrift für Paul Kaegbein zum 65. Geburtstag*, εκδ. E. PLASSMANN, W. SCHMITZ, P. VODOSEK, München 1990, 331-344, 478.

του κώδικα *Σταυρονικήτα 56* (Λάμπρος 921· α' μισό 13ου αι.) αναφέρεται το όνομα κάποιας μοναχής Ευφροσύνης Πηγηνής, την οποία οι Τσιούμη και Γαλάβαρης δέχονται ως πιθανή γραφέα, βάσει του ίδιου μελανιού του σημειώματος με αυτό του κειμένου του τόμου, σε αντίθεση με τον Λάμπρο που την τοποθετεί στον δέκατο πέμπτο αιώνα[41]. Ωστόσο το πρόσωπο αυτό πρέπει να ταυτίζεται με τη συνώνυμη της που το 1546 μνημονεύεται σε πατριαρχικό έγγραφο του Διονυσίου Β' ως παλαιότερη αφιερώτρια σπιτιού στη Μ. Σταυρονικήτα, αφιέρωση που είχε τότε επικυρώσει ο νέος κτήτορας της μονής πατριάρχης Ιερεμίας Α'[42]. Αν αυτό είναι ορθό, η Ευφροσύνη φαίνεται να συνδέεται με τη Μονή και μάλλον πρέπει να τη θεωρήσουμε κάτοχο του Τετραευαγγελίου και δωρήτριά του σε αυτή, ίσως όχι τον δέκατο έκτο αιώνα, αλλά σε εποχή όχι πολύ παλαιότερη. Δεδομένου μάλιστα ότι στο έγγραφο αναφέρεται ως χήρα ενδέχεται οι αφιερώσεις της να έγιναν για τη μνήμη του συζύγου της Παντολέοντα. Ωστόσο πρόβλημα προκύπτει από ένα άλλο σημείωμα του κώδικα (φ. 4^{r}), στο οποίο αυτός αναφέρεται ως αφιέρωμα προς τη Μονή από κάποιον προηγούμενό της Ιωάσαφ, στον οποίο ανήκε[43].

Σε άλλη περίπτωση μία προφανώς απλή γυναίκα, η Σοφία κόρη του Ρίκου Κοντοϊωάννου, αντιγράφει το 1468/9 το *Μηναίο Σιμωνόπετρας 109* [Λάμπρος 1377]· Μηναίο Μαΐου), σύμφωνα με το κωδικογραφικό της σημείωμα, στο τέλος του. Ο κώδικας καταστράφηκε, όπως και οι περισσότεροι της βιβλιοθήκης αυτής κατά την πυρκαγιά του 1891, με αποτέλεσμα να μην είμαστε σε θέση να γνωρίζουμε την πιθανή ύπαρξη σε αυτόν άλλων σημειωμάτων, που θα μας διαφώτιζαν για τη σχέση της Σοφίας με τη Μονή[44].

---

41. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Α', 79· ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Μονὴ Σταυρονικήτα* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 28), τόμ. Α', 100 (έκδοση του σημειώματος· περιγραφή του κώδικα, 99-106), τόμ. Β', 150-169 (φωτογραφίες)· ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (1903) (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 251 (23). Την άποψη του Λάμπρου δέχεται και η TALBOT, Bluestocking Nuns (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 6), 612, που θεωρεί την Ευφροσύνη κάτοχο του Τετραευαγγελίου.

42. Α. ΓΙΑΝΝΑΚΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, *Ἀρχεῖο τῆς Ἱ. Μ. Σταυρονικήτα. Ἐπιτομὲς ἐγγράφων, 1533-1800* [Ἐθνικὸ Ἵδρυμα Ἐρευνῶν, Ἰνστιτοῦτο Ἱστορικῶν Ἐρευνῶν. Ἀθωνικὰ Σύμμεικτα 8], Ἀθήνα 2001, 56-58.

43. ΜΑΥΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ-ΤΣΙΟΥΜΗ, ΓΑΛΑΒΑΡΗΣ, *Μονὴ Σταυρονικήτα* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 28), τόμ. Α', 100.

44. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 9), τόμ. Α', 124-125· ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Ἑλληνίδες βιβλιογράφοι (1903) (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 253-254 (25-26), ο οποίος βασιζόμενος στο βαπτιστικό όνομα του πατέρα της Σοφίας υποθέτει ότι ο κώδικας γράφηκε σε φραγκοκρατούμενη περιοχή. Για την πυρκαγιά της 28ης Μαΐου 1891, βλ. SP. LAMBROS, Notes from Athens.

Μία ακόμη αφιέρωση θα μπορούσε να προστεθεί στον κατάλογό μας, αν και δεν έχουμε καμία πληροφορία για τη χρονολόγησή της, εξαιτίας του ιδιαίτερου χαρακτήρα της. Ειδικότερα, η Αικατερίνη, σύζυγος του Γεωργίου Καμαράσι, αφιέρωσε από κοινού με αυτόν ένα Τετραευαγγέλιο στη Μονή Μεγίστης Λαύρας (*Λαύρας Α 100*, Ευστρατιάδης αρ. 100· 12ος αι.) για να συγχωρηθούν οι αμαρτίες τους και ως δέηση για άλλα έξι πρόσωπα, όπως αναφέρεται σε έμμετρο σημείωμα στο φ. 233^{v} του τόμου[45]. Αν και δεν αναφέρεται η σχέση του ζεύγους με τα πρόσωπα αυτά (χαρακτηρίζονται όμως ως ζώντες), πιθανότατα πρόκειται για μία ολόκληρη οικογένεια.

Θα μπορούσαμε ίσως να προσθέσουμε στους κώδικες που ανήκαν σε γυναίκες και κατόπιν βρέθηκαν στον Άθωνα και τον *Oxon. Cromwell 27* (*Misc. 27676*· Ευαγγελιστάριο· 11ος αι.). Ο κώδικας αυτός φέρει στο τέλος του σύντομη επίκληση του Θεού από κάποια Ειρήνη (*μνήσθητι, Κύριε, τῆς ψυχῆς τῆς δούλης σου Εἰρήνης*), γραμμένη όχι από το χέρι του κωδικογράφου, ενώ ένα άλλο σημείωμα μιλά για αφιέρωσή του, πολύ αργότερα, από κάποιον Αντώνιο μοναχό και πρωτοσύγκελλο για την ψυχική του σωτηρία[46]. Αν και η κτήση του τόμου από την Ειρήνη, βάσει μόνο της σύντομης προσευχής της, δεν είναι απόλυτα βέβαιη –τέτοιες επικλήσεις μπορούν να προέρχονται και από απλούς αναγνώστες–, ο H. Coxe τη δέχεται και αργότερα και ο Σπ. Λάμπρος[47]. Το χειρόγραφο είναι ένα από τα έξι (συν μία χάρτινη απεικόνιση της Μονής Παντοκράτορος) που παραχώρησε το 1727 ο ηγούμενός της Δοσίθεος στο Πανεπιστήμιο της Οξφόρδης ως αντάλλαγμα για την οικονομική του βοήθεια προς τη Μονή, ύστερα από αίτημά του δύο έτη νωρίτερα[48].

Οι παραπάνω μαρτυρίες για σχέσεις γυναικών με τον Άθωνα μέσω βιβλίων καθιστούν φανερό ότι ο απαγορευμένος για αυτές χώρος του μπορούσε να

Manuscripts Lost in the Burning of the Monastery of Simonopetra, *The Athenaeum* 98 (1 Αυγούστου 1891), 161-162.

45. ΛΑΥΡΙΩΤΗΣ, ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ, *Κατάλογος* (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 27), 11· Σ. ΕΥΣΤΡΑΤΙΑΔΗΣ, Ἁγιορειτικῶν κωδίκων σημειώματα. Α'. Τῆς Λαύρας τοῦ ἁγίου Ἀθανασίου, *Γρηγόριος ὁ Παλαμᾶς* 1 (1917), 62 (έκδοση του σημειώματος).

46. H. O. COXE, *Bodleian Library. Quarto Catalogues*, 1. *Greek Manuscripts. Reprinted with Corrections from the Edition of 1853*, Oxford 1969, 456.

47. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΣ, Ἑλληνίδες κύριαι (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 5), 91-92.

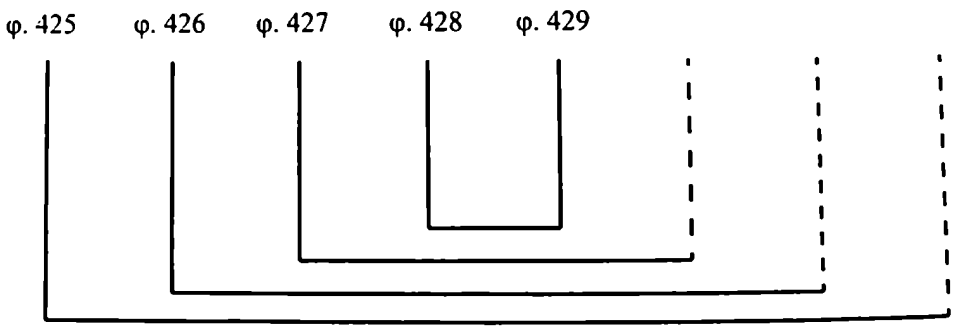
48. F. MADAN, *A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford which Have not Hitherto been Catalogued in the Quarto Series*, τόμ. Ε': *Collections Received during the Second Half of the 19th Century and Miscellaneous Manuscripts Acquired between 1695 and 1890*, Oxford 1905, 331.

γίνει προσιτός και το βιβλίο ως αντικείμενο με μεγάλη πνευματική, πρακτική και υλική αξία που ταξιδεύει εύκολα αποτελούσε έναν ακόμη τρόπο για αυτό. Οι λόγοι που αναζητούσαν ένα δεσμό με το Όρος δεν νομίζουμε ότι διαφοροποιούνται από τον βασικό, στον οποίο κατέληξε η Alice-Mary Talbot, δηλαδή την σωτηρία της ψυχής τους, τη στιγμή που για αυτές ήταν αδύνατο το προσκύνημα στις μονές του[49]. Ωστόσο, σε αντίθεση με άλλα κειμήλια και κυρίως με την κάθε είδους ακίνητη ιδιοκτησία, δεν συναντήσαμε καμία μαρτυρία για πώληση βιβλίου από γυναίκα προς κάποια μονή, καθώς και για προσπάθεια μελλοντικής εξασφάλισης των προς το ζην μέσω του συστήματος των αδελφάτων –όπως διαπιστώνεται συχνά σε έγγραφα– που θα «ανταλλάσονταν» με κάποιον κώδικα, αν και στο Βατοπέδι γνωρίζουμε μία τέτοια περίπτωση, το 1444, χωρίς πάντως εμπλοκή γυναικών[50]. Στον παραπάνω βασικό λόγο θα προσθέταμε ίσως και την εξασφάλιση κάποιου περισσότερο πολιτικού όφελους, στις πολλές περιπτώσεις γυναικών από ηγεμονικές οικογένειες. Στο ερώτημα γιατί προτιμούσαν το βιβλίο ως μέσο «διείσδυσής» τους στον αθωνικό κόσμο –και όχι λ.χ. κάποιο ακίνητο περιουσιακό στοιχείο ή ίσως κάποιο άλλο πολύτιμο αντικείμενο–, η απάντηση μάλλον έχει να κάνει με την οικονομική δυνατότητα κάθε δωρήτριας και ενδεχομένως και με τον πρακτικό χαρακτήρα ενός χειρογράφου (αλλά και τον πνευματικό, εφόσον περιέχει ιερά κείμενα).

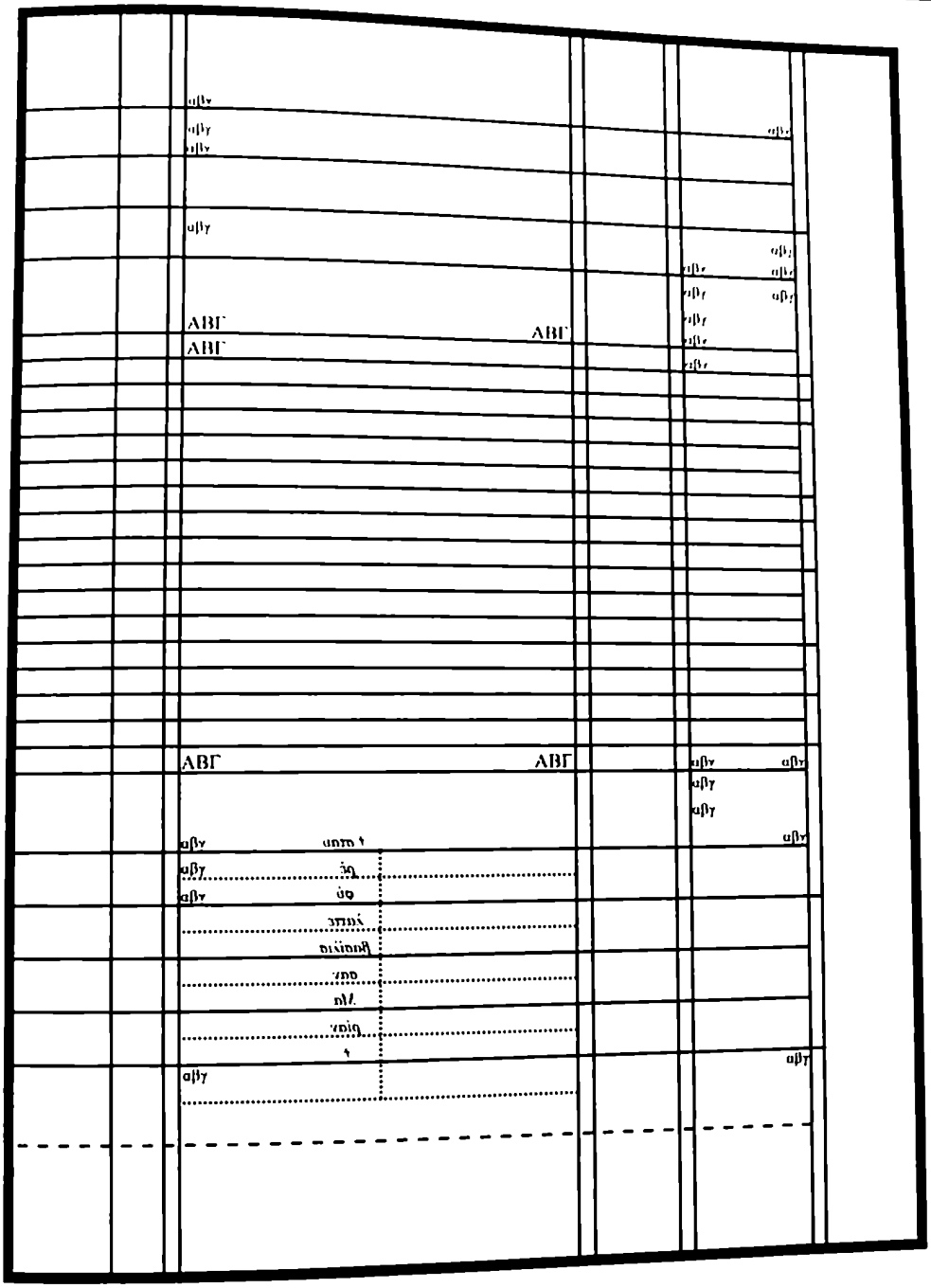
Έχοντας υπόψιν τα παραπάνω η σχέση του αθωνικού μοναχισμού με το γυναικείο φύλο δείχνει να κινείται σε δύο επίπεδα. Στο ψυχρά θεολογικό-ασκητικό (και εν τέλει μόνο θεωρητικό) ο Αγιορείτης πρέπει να παραμένει «αποστειρωμένος» από κάθε θηλυκή παρουσία, των ζώων συμπεριλαμβανομένων. Στο πρακτικό, όμως, οι γυναίκες δεν αποκλείονται από τις υποθέσεις των μονών και εντάσσονται, όπως είδαμε, ακόμη και στην παράδοσή τους, εάν αυτό σημαίνει κάποιο όφελος. Αρκεί να μην περνούν το σύνορο της χερσονήσου.

49. Talbot, Women and Mt Athos (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 2), 78-79.

50. Το 1444 ένα Ευαγγελιστάριο παραχωρείται στη Μονή Βατοπεδίου για αδελφάτο με αξία τριάντα πέντε υπέρπυρα· Kravari, Note (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 40), 384 αρ. 4. Για την εμπλοκή γυναικών σε αδελφάτα στο Άγιον Όρος, βλ. Makuljević, Žene priložnice (βλ. ό. π. σημ. 4), 178-180.



Σχήμα 1.
Αγίου Παύλου 2. Σύνθεση του τελευταίου τετραδίου του κώδικα.
Με διακεκομμένες γραμμές δηλώνονται τα φύλλα που έχουν εκπέσει.



Σχήμα 2.
Αγίου Παύλου 2. Διάταξη της χαράκωσης (όπως διακρίνεται στο recto των φύλλων).

Με πυκνές διακεκομμένες γραμμές δηλώνεται η πρόσθετη χαράκωση στο φ. 429ν.
Με αραιές διακεκομμένες γραμμές δηλώνεται η επιπλέον γραμμή περιθωρίου ορισμένων φύλλων.
Με κεφαλαία γράμματα ορίζεται η έκταση και η πυκνότητα (αναλογία στίχων προς τους οδηγούς) του κυρίως κειμένου κάθε φύλλου, ενώ με μικρά αυτή των σχολίων στα περιθώρια και του σημειώματος για τη βασίλισσα Μαρία στο φ. 429ν (σε αντίστροφη θέση και με αντίστροφη κατεύθυνση των γραμμάτων, καθώς βρίσκεται στο verso του φύλλου).

Nicholas Melvani*

Depictions of Nuns in Palaiologan Constantinople

Female monasticism in Palaiologan Constantinople has attracted the attention of international scholarship for decades. The importance of the great imperial and aristocratic convents of the Byzantine capital has been demonstrated from several points of view, including those of social history, art history, and gender studies[1]. However, significant aspects of the iconography of nuns concerning their space and everyday life have been ignored, even by studies dealing with the materiality of images[2] –apparently the appearance and attributes of nuns are considered a spiritual rather than a material topic. Nevertheless, focusing on images of nuns and their interaction with their viewers can be a useful tool in studying Late Byzantine female monasticism.

The convent of the Virgin Bebaia Elpis was founded by Theodora Synadene, niece of Michael VIII Palaiologos shortly after 1285[3], and it is best known through the illuminated manuscript that contains its *Typikon*, the so-called

* Institute of Historical Research/ The National Hellenic Research Foundation, Athens.

1. See for example, A.-M. Talbot, Bluestocking Nuns: Intellectual Life in the Convents of Late Byzantium, in: *Okeanos. Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, ed. by C. Mango and O. Pritsak with the assistance of U. M. Pasicznyk = *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 7 (1983), 604-618 (= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, XVIII); A. Weyl-Carr, Women and Monasticism in Byzantium: Introduction from an Art Historian, *BF* 9 (1985), 1-15.

2. The chapters in M. Parani, *Reconstructing the Reality of Images: Byzantine Material Culture and Religious Iconography (11th-15th Centuries)* [The Medieval Mediterranean 41], Leiden–Boston 2003, 11-158 on dress codes do not deal with monks and nuns.

3. The chronology has been established by I. Hutter, Die Geschichte des Lincoln College Typikons, *JÖB* 45 (1995), 79-114. See also V. Kidonopoulos, *Bauten in Konstantinopel, 1204-1328: Verfall und Zerstörung, Restaurierung, Umbau und Neubau von Profan- und Sakralbauten* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 1], Wiesbaden 1994, 69-74 and A. Effenberger, Die Klöster der beiden Kyrai Martha und die Kirche des Bebaia Elpis-Klosters in Konstantinopel, *Millennium* 3 (2006), 255-294.

Lincoln College *Typikon*, preserved in Oxford[4]. The manuscript's best known feature is the series of portraits painted on the first twelve folios of the codex, depicting members of the foundress' family and her descendants. A portrait of the foundress with her husband John is painted on folio 7r, surmounted by a bust of the Virgin and Child, with their daughter Euphrosyne between them; all three personages are depicted in monastic garb[5]. John is identified as the monk Ioakeim and Theodora as the nun Theodoule. The latter is wearing a typical black mantle and is holding her daughter by the hand, evidently offering her to the Virgin. Her tall flat-topped headdress is also noteworthy. Euphrosyne, who is indeed known to have been tonsured at a very young age, is depicted as a novice in a brown gown.

Theodora and Euphrosyne are represented again on folio 11r, only this time Euphrosyne is an adult. Theodora is presenting both the monastery and her daughter to the Virgin and Child, who are represented on the page to the left with the inscription *Μήτηρ Θεοῦ ἡ Βεβαία Ἐλπίς*. The Virgin responds by extending her left arm towards the two nuns. This devotional composition is extended to include the last image in this series of miniatures, on folio 12r: a group portrait including the figures of several nuns, representing the entire monastic community (*κοινόβιον*), including the abbess, distinguished by her staff, and some novices in the foreground, who are clearly younger and are wearing blue-grey hoods. The nuns are extending their hands towards the left, evidently to the Virgin on 10v, making the image a continuation of the previous page[6]. It has been shown by Irmgard Hutter that the manuscript was the copy destined for use in the monastery itself; the portraits were probably added around 1330-1335 by Theodora's daughter[7]. Given that the *Typikon* was

4. HUTTER, Die Geschichte (as in footnote 3); CHR. GASTGEBER, Das Typikon Lincoln College gr. 35 und das Patriarchat von Konstantinopel, *Scripta* 7 (2014), 95-110; A. CUTLER and P. MAGDALINO, Some Precisions on the Lincoln College Typikon, *CA* 27 (1978), 179-198; A.-M. TALBOT, Bebaia Elpis: Typikon of Theodora Synadene for the Convent of the Mother of God Bebaia Elpis in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 57, 1512-1578.

5. CHR. HANNICK and G. SCHMALZBAUER, Die Synadenoi. Prosopographische Untersuchung zu einer byzantinischen Familie, *JÖB* 25 (1976), 125-161, esp. 134-135, 140-141.

6. The portraits have been treated from the artistic point of view in H. BELTING, *Das illuminierte Buch in der spätbyzantinischen Gesellschaft* [Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-histor. Kl., 1970, Abh. 1], Heidelberg 1970, 76-82 and I. SPATHARAKIS, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* [Byzantina Neerlandica 6], Leiden 1976, 190-206.

7. HUTTER, Die Geschichte (as in footnote 3), 105-111. For an alternative interpretation, see C. HENNESSY, The Lincoln College Typikon: Influences of Church and Family in an

recommended for frequent readings within the monastery, it is obvious that the codex and its illustration were intended as a continuous reminder to the reader of the family character of the foundation; the image of this family and its various branches was defined through a mixture of aristocratic portraits and portraits of nuns[8].

Interestingly, female presence through portraits is also found in male monasteries. The nun Melane Palaiologina is depicted in the donor portrait in the inner narthex of the Chora monastery, next to the entrance to the naos, dressed in monastic garb to the left of the grand-scale figures of Christ and the Virgin, which dominate the composition; a male figure identified as Isaakios Komnenos occupies the right side of the Virgin (pl. 2a, p. 386)[9]. Not much of Melane's figure is preserved, mainly her head, her hands, and traces of her body, dressed in a black mantle (pl. 2b, p. 387). Her head is covered with a tall headdress. She is kneeling and her hands are extended in supplication to Christ. The accompanying inscription identifies her as the nun Melane, lady of the Mongols, member of the Palaiologos family. She is usually identified as Mary of the Mongols, the illegitimate daughter of Michael VIII Palaiologos. Unfortunately, it is not clear why she is represented in the Chora panel together with Isaakios Komnenos, the twelfth-century restorer of the building, but it is possible that she was responsible for renovating the monastery in the late thirteenth century, before Theodoros Metochites took over in the fourteenth century[10].

Nuns are also included in the decoration of the tombs of the Chora church. The arcosolium designated as Tomb D in the parekklesion is a typical example of a double funerary portrait (pl. 3a, p. 388). The back wall of the niche is decorated

---

Illuminated Foundation Document for a Palaiologan Convent in Constantinople, in: *Under the Influence. The Concept of Influence and the Study of Illuminated Manuscripts*, ed. by J. LOWDEN and A. BOVEY, Turnhout 2007, 97-109.

8. For the manuscript's importance for the monastery's identity, see also N. GAUL, Writing 'With Joyful and Leaping Soul': Sacralization, Scribal Hands, and Ceremonial in the Lincoln College Typikon, *DOP* 69 (2015), 243-271.

9. P. A. UNDERWOOD, *Kariye Djami*, vol. I: *Historical Introduction and Description of the Mosaics and Frescoes*, New York 1966, 45-48; N. TETERIATNIKOV, The Place of the Nun Melania (the Lady of the Mongols) in the Deesis Program of the Inner Narthex of Chora, Constantinople, *CA* 43 (1995), 163-180.

10. For the architectural features of this part of the inner narthex, see R. G. OUSTERHOUT, *The Architecture of the Kariye Camii in Istanbul* [DOS 25], Washington, D.C. 1987, 33, 65-70, 96-100.

with the portraits of the great "konostavlos" Michael Tornikes and his wife as laypeople on either side of the Virgin and Child: they are identified by the accompanying inscriptions. Both of them reappear on the soffits of the niche as the monk Makarios and the nun Eugenia –the wife on the right-hand side in a position corresponding to her secular portrait. Eugenia is represented in full pose, turned towards the centre of the niche, her hands raised in supplication (pl. 3b, p. 389). She is wearing a mantle closed at the neck under a black collar and a flat-topped hat covered by a black veil enveloping the shoulders[11]. Both Eugenia and the monk are identified as the same persons represented in the niche by inscriptions. Nothing else is known about her except for her monastic name, as attested in the mosaic inscription[12]. The tomb is one of the most lavishly decorated arcosolia of Palaiologan Constantinople, with its richly adorned marble relief facing and the 24-line epigram glorifying the deceased; his death occurred around 1328, which provides the date of the tomb and its decoration. It is possible that his wife was also buried in the arcosolium together with her husband. In any case, the message of the portraits is clear: Michael and his wife, at some point in their life, were tonsured, possibly at around the same time (obviously by entering a male and a female monastery respectively). Although the two double portraits stress the couple's bonds, the verse inscription above is all about Tornikes both as a military commander and a pious monk; there is no mention of his wife at all[13].

Two more tombs in the Chora church feature portraits of nuns: Tomb C, in the north wall of the parekklesion, is decorated with a group portrait including three men and one woman on the back wall of the niche with their arms raised in intercession towards Christ who is depicted in the arch soffit flanked by two archangels (pl. 4a, p. 390). The woman at the far right of the composition has

11. UNDERWOOD, *Kariye* (as in footnote 9), 76-80. For the structure and significance of double portraits, see U. WEISSBROD, *"Hier liegt der Knecht Gottes": Gräber in byzantinischen Kirchen und ihr Dekor (11. bis 15. Jahrhundert): unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Höhlenkirchen Kappadokiens* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 5], Wiesbaden 2003, 130-134.

12. For Eugenia, see *PLP* 6180. For Tornikes: *PLP* 29132; G. SCHMALZBAUER, Die Tornikioi in der Palaiologenzeit, *JÖB* 19 (1968), 131-132.

13. For the marble facing and the epigram, see also N. MELVANI, *Late Byzantine Sculpture* [Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages 6], Turnhout 2013, 17-18, 91; A. RHOBY, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein nebst Addenda zu den Bänden 1 und 2* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-histor. Kl. Denkschriften 474. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 35], Wien 2014, 643-650.

been identified as a nun: she is wearing a light yellowish brown dress and over it a long dark brown mantle (pl. 4b, p. 391). The headdress is light yellowish brown and is tied tightly around her face, covering the shoulders[14]. The occupants of this tomb have not been identified and it is impossible to determine in what capacity the nun in question is included in the portrait. The most logical assumption would be that the couple occupying the centre belonged to a branch of the Palaiologos–Asanes family, based on the monograms of these two families adorning the mantle of the woman. The nun may have been a member of the family. It is generally assumed that this tomb and its decoration date from about the same time as the other tombs in the chapel, i.e. around 1330.

The decoration of Tomb E in the outer narthex of the Chora presents a complicated puzzle. On the back wall of the niche there is a group portrait featuring a male descendant of the Palaiologos, Raoul, and Asanes families, judging by the monograms decorating his dress (pl. 5a, p. 392). He is flanked by two children (perhaps his sons) and accompanied by three more lay figures, all of them standing below the Virgin and Child surrounded by hymnographers. The jambs are decorated with monastic portraits: to the left of the viewer is represented a monk and to the right a nun with her hands raised in supplication, identified by an inscription as Athanasia (pl. 5b, p. 393). The poorly preserved inscription records her death, but does not clarify her relation to the other personages depicted in the composition, save for the genitive *τοῦ κτήτορος*. Her long light yellowish brown tunic is covered by a dark reddish brown mantle with long folds and the black tightly fitting headdress covers the head completely. The tomb is usually dated to around 1340[15]. To summarize the evidence from the Chora tombs, it is likely that the main occupants of the arcosolia were monks from the monastery; the existence of portraits of the nuns may imply that they were buried together with their husbands or relatives.

A marble tomb slab, now in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul, is the only preserved portrait of a nun rendered in relief (pls 6a-b, p. 394-395)[16]. Only

14. Underwood, *Kariye* (as in footnote 9), 72-76; S. Brooks, The History and Significance of Tomb Monuments at the Chora Monastery, in: *Restoring Byzantium: The Kariye Camii in Istanbul and the Byzantine Institute Restoration*, ed. by H. Klein and R. Ousterhout, New York 2004, 23-31, here at 26-27.

15. Underwood, *Kariye* (as in footnote 9), 80-88; S. Brooks, *Commemoration of the Dead: Late Byzantine Tomb Decoration (mid-thirteenth to mid-fifteenth Centuries)*, Unpubl. Ph.D., New York University, 2002, 301-304.

16. W. H. Buckler, The Monument of a Palaiologina, in: *Mélanges offerts à M. Gustave Schlumberger*, vol. 2, Paris 1924, 521-526; N. Firatli, *La sculpture byzantine figurée au*

the lower part of the woman's body is preserved, but Titos Papamastorakis proposed a convincing reconstruction, according to which the figure was represented in ¾ with her hands joined together in supplication, addressing a figure of the Virgin which would have been depicted on the right side of the slab[17]. The composition probably occupied the back wall of an arcosolium niche. The nun is wearing a mantle which falls over her tunic and her shoes are also discernible. The verse epitaph would have occupied the centre of the slab[18]. It mentions that the deceased, a certain Maria, was a member of the Palaiologos family who became a nun. Thus, the epigram with its several allusions to the virtues of monastic life, and the relief portrait complement each other and convey the monastic identity of the woman in a straightforward manner, combining visual and textual media into a work of art typical of the artistic and literary level of early Palaiologan aristocratic patronage. The style of the carving indicates a date in the last quarter of the thirteenth century[19]. The slab is usually attributed to the monastery of Lips, which is known to have housed the burials of several female members of the Palaiologos family[20]. Recently, a connection with the convent of Kyra-Martha has also been put forward[21].

Musée Archéologique d'Istanbul [Bibliothèque de l'Institut français d'études anatoliennes d'Istanbul 30], Paris 1990, 67; MELVANI, *Sculpture* (as in footnote 13), 17-18, 233.

17. T. PAPAMASTORAKIS, Επιτύμβιες παραστάσεις κατά τη μέση και ύστερη βυζαντινή περίοδο, *ΔΧΑΕ* 19 (1996-97), 285-304, esp. 300-302. C. MANGO, Sépultures et épitaphes aristocratiques à Byzance, in: *Epigrafia medievale greca e latina. Ideologia e funzione. Atti del seminario di Erice (12-18 settembre 1991)*, ed. by G. CAVALLO and C. MANGO [Biblioteca del "Centro per il collegamento degli studi medievali e umanistici in Umbria", Collana 11], Spoleto 1995, 106-107 had proposed a similar reconstruction.

18. For the verse inscription, see RHOBY, *Epigramme auf Stein* (as in footnote 13), 628-632.

19. MELVANI, *Late Byzantine Sculpture* (as in footnote 13), 233. RHOBY (*Epigramme auf Stein*, as in footnote 13, 631-632) prefers a fourteenth-century date, which agrees with his attribution of the epigram to the poet Manuel Philes.

20. T. MACRIDY, The Monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologoi, *DOP* 18 (1964), 253-278, esp. 271; V. MARINIS, Tombs and Burials in the Monastery tou Libos in Constantinople, *DOP* 63 (2009), 147-166, esp. 161-165. For the monastery of Lips, originally a male monastery, which was refounded as a convent by Theodora Palaiologina, see also A.-M. TALBOT, Empress Theodora Palaiologina, Wife of Michael VIII, *DOP* 46 (1992), 295-303 (= EADEM, *Women and Religious Life*, as in footnote 1, V).

21. N. MELVANI, The Monument of a Palaiologina and the Monastery of Kyra-Martha in Constantinople, *Arkeoloji ve Sanat Dergisi* 155 (2017), 161-174.

Additional images of nuns in Palaiologan Constantinople are available thanks to representations of the very popular saint Theodosia, a nun herself, whose cult was increasingly practiced in Constantinople[22]. Icons of the saint normally depict her frontally, facing the viewer and holding a cross. The white cloth wrapped around her neck hides the wound, which, according to hagiographic tradition, was the cause of her martyrdom during Iconoclasm. Another noteworthy feature of her iconography is the inclusion of the tall or flat-topped hat that in the later representations replaces the simple veil covering her head in the saint's earlier images[23]. Unfortunately there is no visual evidence from the monastery of Saint Theodosia, the centre of the saint's cult in Constantinople[24], but it is possible that the shrine housing her relics, which attracted large crowds of pilgrims until the very last day of Byzantine Constantinople, was the centre where the saint's iconography was first introduced and from which her images were disseminated to the city and to the rest of the Byzantine world.

Theodosia also appears on the famous icon depicting the Triumph of Orthodoxy in the British Museum, which dates from the late fourteenth century and is usually attributed to Constantinople[25]. Here she is represented

22. For the cult of Saint Theodosia, see S. Kotzabassi, *Das hagiographische Dossier der heiligen Theodosia von Konstantinopel* [Byzantinisches Archiv 21], Berlin–New York 2009; N. Constas, Life of St. Theodosia of Constantinople, in: *Byzantine Defenders of Images. Eight Saints' Lives in English Translation*, ed. by A.-M. Talbot [Byzantine Saints' Lives in Translation 2], Washington, D.C. 1998, 1-8.

23. The iconography of Saint Theodosia has been studied in D. Mouriki, Portraits of Saint Theodosia in Five Sinai Icons, in: *Θυμίαμα στη Μνήμη Λασκαρίνας Μπούρα*, Athens 1994, 213-219; G. Galavaris, Two Icons of St. Theodosia at Sinai, *ΔΧΑΕ* 17 (1993-94), 313-316, and Chr. Baltoyanni, Εικόνα της Αγίας Θεοδοσίας της Κωνσταντινουπολίτισσας στη Νάξο, *ΔΧΑΕ* 22 (2001), 215-228.

24. Usually identified with the complex comprising the Gül Camii and the Ayakapı Mescidi: A. Effenberger, Theodosia von Konstantinopel–Kult und Kultort. Ergänzende Überlegungen zu ihrem "hagiographischen Dossier", *JÖB* 61 (2011), 121-134. For an analysis of the buildings, see H. Schaefer, *Die Gül Camii in Istanbul.* Ein Beitrag zur mittelbyzantinischen Kirchenarchitektur Konstantinopels, Tübingen 1973; H. Çetinkaya, Ayakapı Yakınındaki Bizans Dönemi Yapı Kalıntıları, in: *Dünü ve bugünü ile Haliç sempozyumu: 22-23 Mayıs 2003, Cibali, İstanbul*, ed. by S. F. Göncüoğlu, Istanbul 2004, 109-119 as well as W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls. Byzantion, Konstantinupolis, Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhundert*, Tübingen 1977, 97, 140-143.

25. D. Kotoula, The British Museum Triumph of Orthodoxy Icon, in: *Byzantine Orthodoxies. Papers from the Thirty-sixth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, University of Durham, 23-25 March 2002*, ed. by A. Louth and D. Cassidy [Society for the Promotion

among eleven iconophile saints –the only female saint of the group– in full pose, holding a candle and an icon of Christ. Her portrait, identified by the appropriate caption, is the first from left in the lower zone of the composition, below the image of the Virgin Hodegetria. Her tunic is light brown, whereas the mantle is reddish brown and the hat with the veil is black. In this case she is also wearing a black analabos. These characteristics agree with the representations of Theodosia in the icons with the individual portraits of the saint. In short, the image of Saint Theodosia seems to have evolved into a type reminiscent of the Palaiologan aristocratic monastic portraits, making the attire of nuns an important element in aristocratic identity and piety.

Portraits of nuns from Komnenian Constantinople are not preserved, but they probably existed alongside representations of monks attested in the sources[26]. Thus, it seems that the Palaiologan images were part of the general renewal of Komnenian monastic culture that took place after 1261[27]. The iconography of Palaiologan nuns is in accordance with what the sources say about female monastic attire[28]: the standard items included shoes, a tunic, the cross-shaped analabos, a mantle, and a veil covering the head. Nuns of high rank and exceptional piety also bore a tall hat underneath the headdress[29]. Two chromatic

---

of Byzantine Studies. Publications 12], Aldershot 2006, 121-130; R. CORMACK, Icon of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, in: *Byzantium*, ed. by D. BUCKTON, London 1994, 129-130.

26. For example, in the epigrams of the collection preserved in codex *Marc. gr. 524*: SP. LAMPROS, Ὁ Μαρκιανὸς Κῶδιξ 524, *NE* 8 (1911), 19-21, no. 50: *ἐπὶ τοῖς εἰκονίσμασι τοῦ πρωτοσεβαστοῦ καὶ μεγάλου δουκὸς κυροῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ καὶ τῆς (πρωτο)σεβαστῆς ἐν τῇ μονῇ τοῦ Εὐεργέτου* and no. 51: *Ἐπὶ τῷ μοναχικῷ εἰκονίσματι τοῦ αὐτοῦ πρωτοσεβαστοῦ*. Apparently, the epigrams cited described double portraits similar to those in the Palaiologan Chora. A good example of a Middle Byzantine portrait of a nun in supplication is found in an illuminated manuscript in the library of the Monastery of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai (*Sin. gr. 61*): SPATHARAKIS, *Portrait* (as in footnote 6), 48-49.

27. Portraits of nuns became more common in the Late Byzantine period also outside Constantinople. See some examples from the Peloponnese: SH. E. J. GERSTEL, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium. Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*, New York 2015, 68-70.

28. The surviving monastic *Typika* constitute an important body of evidence in this respect. See J. BALL, Decoding the Habit of the Byzantine Nun, *Journal of Modern Hellenism* 27-28 (2009-2010), 25-52.

29. For the meaning and significance of the tall, flat-topped hat, see BALTOYANNI, Εικόνα, 220-222; M. EMMANUEL, Hairstyles and Headdresses of Empresses, Princesses, and Ladies of the Aristocracy in Byzantium, *ΔΧΑΕ* 17 (1993-1994), 113-120, here at 119.

variations existed: the set of dark clothes, usually black, and the version including a combination of shades of brown and yellow, although the headdress was normally dark-colored. Although the habit was enough to identify a woman as a nun to any viewer, an inscription bearing the word *μοναχὴ* is almost always included: apparently, the combination of word and image was essential to emphasize the monastic attributes of nuns (as is the case with monks, as well). The gestures and poses of the nuns are typical of donor and funerary portraits: they are either represented with their hands extended towards a central holy figure in an intercessory manner, or as donors, offering the subject of their patronage to the Virgin and Christ.

Unfortunately, no monumental painting from any of the great Constantinopolitan convents has been preserved[30], but it is very likely that tombs or dedicatory panels featured funerary or donor portraits of nuns and their families, perhaps resembling the portraits in the Lincoln College *Typikon*. For example, the donor portraits in the *Typikon* may have been duplicated in the monumental decoration of the main church of the Bebaia Elpis monastery[31]. In any case, it is interesting that nuns appear in funerary and donor portraits in almost all the major monuments of Palaiologan Constantinople for which visual documentation is available, both male and female. The Pammakaristos church is an exception, but portraits of nuns with their husbands and families are attested in the sources there as well[32]. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that

30. For the remains of painted decoration in the Lips monastery, see C. MANGO and E. J. W. HAWKINS, Additional Notes on the Monastery of Lips, *DOP* 18 (1964), 299-315, esp. 302-303. No decoration has been reported from the female monastery of Saint Andrew in Krisei (now the Koca Mustafa Paşa Camii), re-founded around the end of the thirteenth century by Theodora Raoulaina, niece of Michael VIII Palaiologos. See MÜLLER-WIENER, *Bildlexikon* (as in footnote 24), 173-176.

31. According to A. BERGER (The Historical Topography of Kalenderhane Camii, in: *Excavations at Kalenderhane*, ed. by C. L. STRIKER, Wiesbaden 1997, 8-13), the building known as the Vefa Kilise Camii should be identified with the church of Saint Prokopios of Chelone, which in the Palaiologan period was within the complex of the Bebaia Elpis nunnery (although it was not the main church). Therefore, the mosaic decoration of its narthex can be attributed to the patronage of Theodora Synadene and her family. However, the iconography of the mosaics (mainly images of prophets), does not betray any relation to the patrons or to the monastic community. For the mosaic decoration, see H. HALLENSLEBEN, Zu Annexbauten der Kilise Camii in Istanbul, *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 15 (1965), 208-217.

32. The sixteenth-century description of the Pammakaristos by John Malaxos records the inscriptions from the tomb monuments, which were very similar to those in the Chora

depictions of nuns were a common occurrence in Late Byzantine monuments. Moreover, as Sharon Gerstel has demonstrated, representations of female saints, including nuns, played a significant role in the iconographic layout of nunneries throughout the Byzantine world[33]; this must have been the case in the convents of Palaiologan Constantinople as well.

Images of nuns played a defining role in the identity of female monastic communities, as shown by the portraits in the *Typikon* of the Bebaia Elpis convent. A group portrait including several nuns may have served as a reinforcement of the solidarity within the sisterhood. The same can be said about the image of a nun represented together with her daughter, also in monastic garb, although here the message of the continuity of the family patronage is also expressed. This emphasis on gender within the family and on mother-daughter relationships in a monastic context is also present in the church of Saint John, the south church of the monastic complex of the Lips monastery: according to the *Typikon*, the foundress Theodora Palaiologina was to be buried there together with her mother[34]. The inscription on one of the tombs that have been detected in the church indicates that it bore a portrait of Theodora Palaiologina as a nun with her monastic name Eugenia, in a manner reminiscent of the surviving portraits and inscriptions in the Chora monastery[35].

Portraits of nuns in male monasteries also bear a strong dynastic flavor, since they are often an indispensable element of family representations. The portraits of nuns accompanying their husbands who had become monks emphasized these family ties; in fact, the double portraits (for example, those in the Chora monastery) seem to imply the two different phases of the couples' common life: together as laypeople and, though in separate communities, as monastic figures,

---

monastery. For example, the inscription *ἡ αὐτὴ Θεοδοσία μοναχὴ ἡ Γλάβαινα* apparently accompanied a funerary portrait: P. SCHREINER, Eine unbekannte Beschreibung der Pammakaristoskirche (Fethiye Camii) und weitere Texte zur Topographie Konstantinopels, *DOP* 25 (1971), 219-248, esp. 222; A. EFFENBERGER, Zu den Gräbern in der Pammakaristoskirche, *Byz* 78 (2007), 170-196; MANGO and HAWKINS, Additions (as in footnote 30), 301-303.

33. SH. E. J. GERSTEL, Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium, *DOP* 52 (1998), 89-111, esp. 90-93.

34. *Typikon* of Lips Monastery, ed. H. DELEHAYE, *Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues* [Mémoires. Deuxième série, tom. 13], Brussels 1921, 106-136, here at 130; Engl. transl. by A.-M. TALBOT, Lips: Typikon of Theodora Palaiologina for the Convent of Lips, in: *BMFD*, vol. 3, no. 39, 1254-1286, here at 1278-1279.

35. For the inscription (*Εὐγενία μοναχή*), see MANGO and HAWKINS, Additional Notes (as in footnote 30), 303.

especially after death. It is possible that these nuns were the commissioners of the tombs in the male monasteries and that they arranged for the burials, foreseeing their own burials with their husbands and their families. This pattern is well known in the case of the Pammakaristos monastery –a male monastery–, where Maria Tarchaneiotissa, the widow of the patron Michael Glabas, erected a funerary chapel to house her husband's remains and where she was also buried a few years later[36].

To conclude, nuns are depicted either alone or in the presence of a holy figure, together with other nuns–often relatives, as well as with their husbands and families. Images of nuns are found in both female and male monasteries. In the latter case, the nuns appear as important elements of family identity, but in the convents the emphasis on female power within the family is even stronger. However, in most cases the portraits were situated within spaces with access limited to relatively small monastic communities and members of the Palaiologan elite. The icons of saint Theodosia with her aristocratic appearance, with which most of the city's population must have been familiar, may have functioned as a link between these mainly aristocratic images and much larger audiences and a projection of the role of nuns within the wider framework of Palaiologan society.

36. H. Belting, C. Mango and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Camii) at Istanbul*, Washington, D.C. 1978, 18-25, 69-73; A. Effenberger, Zur Restaurierungstätigkeit des Michael Dukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes im Pammakaristoskloster und zur Erbauungszeit des Parekklesions, *Zograf* 31 (2006/7), 79-94.

NEW APPROACHES AND INSIGHTS

Johannes Preiser-Kapeller*

Mapping Networks of Women in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean: Concepts, Tools and Selected Results

While research on gender and on differences between females and males in present time very often reflects on quantitative aspects (e. g. the gender pay gap or the share of women in boards of management), studies on gender in the medieval or ancient period are much more based on a qualitative close reading of texts (in order to identify gender-specific perspectives, for instance), also due to the lack of quantifiable source material[1]. In this paper, I will try to demonstrate the potential of historical network analysis for a systematic survey of social relations from our sources and their combination into models of social structures which allow for a quantification of some differences between female and male social actors (in our case, in the Late Byzantine elite).

I. Historical network analysis–an overview

The main idea of network theory is to describe the social world with relations; this is of course not a new approach, but can be found in classical texts of social sciences. Norbert Elias for instance stated: "To study individuals study first as isolates and to derive the figurations they form together from what they are without the patterns of their living together, is a confusion of thought, impeding the analysis of these figurations. (...) Individuals are always found in figurations and configurations of individuals are irreducible. To think of a single individual

* Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Medieval Research / Division of Byzantine Research, Department Member, Vienna. The paper was finished as part of the Wittgenstein-Prize-project of Prof. Claudia Rapp (Vienna) "Moving Byzantium", see https://rapp.univie.ac.at/.

1. For an overview on "Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung" in Byzantine studies, cf. M. St. Popović, *Mara Branković. Eine Frau zwischen dem christlichen und dem islamischen Kulturkreis im 15. Jahrhundert* [Peleus 45], Wiesbaden 2010, 18-23.

as if it originally were socially independent, or of individuals here and there regardless of their relations with each other, is a baseless starting point"[2].

Network theory even more assumes "not only that ties matter, but that they are organized in a significant way, that this or that (node) has an interesting position in terms of its ties"[3]. A central aim of network analysis is the identification of structures of relations, which emerge from the sum of interactions and connections between individuals, groups or sites and at the same time influence the scope of actions of everyone entangled in such relations. For this purpose, data on the categories, intensity, frequency and dynamics of interactions and relations between entities of interest is collected in order to allow for further mathematical analysis. This data is organised in the form of matrices (with rows and columns) and graphs (with nodes [vertices] and edges [links], see examples below), which are not only instruments of data collection and visualisation, but also the basis of further mathematical operations on the basis of matrix algebra and graph theory[4].

Once a quantifiable network model has been created it allows for a structural analysis on three levels[5]:

* the level of single nodes; some measures take into account the immediate "neighbourhood" of a node, such as "degree", which measures the number of direct links of a node to other nodes[6]. Other measures focus on the relative

2. N. Elias and J. Scotson, *Etablierte und Außenseiter*, Frankfurt am Main 1993, 72, 264-265.

3. C. Lemercier, Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse in den Geschichtswissenschaften: Warum und Wie?, in: *Historische Netzwerkanalysen*, ed. by A. Müller and W. Neurath, Innsbruck–Vienna–Bozen 2012, 16-41, here at 22.

4. St. Wassermann and K. Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*, Cambridge 1994, 92-166; Ch. Prell, *Social Network Analysis. History, Theory and Methodology*, Los Angeles–London 2012, 9-16.

5. *The Connected Past: Critical and Innovative Approaches to Networks in Archaeology*, ed. by A. Collar, F. Coward, T. Brughmans and B. J. Mills. A special issue of the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22/1 (2015) includes also a most useful glossary of basic terms and concepts of network analysis as well as a well-balanced discussion of potential and pitfalls of network models in archaeology. For historical studies, the best discussion in this regard is Lemercier, Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse.

6. Wassermann and Faust, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 178-183; W. de Nooy, A. Mrvar and V. Batagelj, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis with Pajek*, Cambridge 2005, 63-64; M. Newman, *Networks. An Introduction*, Oxford 2010, 168-169; Prell, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 96-99.

centrality of a node within the entire network due to its position on many or few possible paths between nodes otherwise unconnected–the measure of "betweenness", which can be interpreted as a potential for intermediation (see examples below)[7].

* the level of groups of nodes: one focus is the identification of "clusters", meaning the existence of groups of nodes more densely connected to each other than to the rest of the network; if all nodes within such a group are directly connected with each other, they are called "clique"[8]. In order to detect such cliques and clusters, an inspection of a visualisation of a network can be already quite helpful (see pl. 11, p. 400, for instance); common visualisation tools arrange nodes more closely connected near to each other and thus provide a good impression of such structures[9]. For exact identification, there exist various algorithms of "group detection" (such as the ones developed by the physicist M. Newman), which aim at an optimal "partition" of the network (see an example below)[10].

* on the level of the entire network basic key figures are the number of nodes and of links, the maximum distance between two nodes (expressed in the number of links necessary to find a path from one to the other; "diameter") and the average distance (or path length) between two nodes. A low average path length among nodes together with a high clustering coefficient can be connected to the model of a "small world network", in which most nodes are linked to each other via a relatively small number of edges[11]. Other measurements are

7. R. S. Burt, *Brokerage and Closure: An Introduction to Social Capital*, Oxford 2005; Wassermann and Faust, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 188-192; de Nooy, Mrvar and Batagelj, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis*, 131-133 (as in footnote 6); Newman, *Networks* (as in footnote 6), 185-193; Prell, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 103-107.

8. Wassermann and Faust, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 254-257; J. A. Fuhse, *Soziale Netzwerke. Konzepte und Forschungsmethoden*, Konstanz–Munich 2016, 74-78.

9. Cf. L. Krempel, *Visualisierung komplexer Strukturen. Grundlagen der Darstellung mehrdimensionaler Netzwerke*, Frankfurt–New York 2005; D. Dorling, *The Visualization of Spatial Social Structure*, Chichester 2012.

10. de Nooy, Mrvar, Batagelj, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 6), 66-77; Newman, *Networks* (as in footnote 6), 372-382; Prell, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 151-161; Ch. Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks. Theories, Concepts, and Findings*, Oxford 2012, 46-49.

11. de Nooy, Mrvar and Batagelj, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis*, 125-131; Prell, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 171-172. For the small world-model, cf.

based on the equal or unequal distribution of quantitative characteristics such as degree among nodes; a high "degree centralisation" indicates that many links are concentrated on a relatively small number of nodes (see below the example of the Byzantine elite families marriage network)[12]. These distributions can also be statistically analysed and visualised for all nodes (by counting the frequency of single degree values) and used for the comparison of networks[13].

Networks are of course dynamic: relationships may be established, maintained, modified or terminated; nodes appear in a network and disappear (also from the sources). Standard tools of network analysis (still) force us to integrate these changes into one more or less static model. The common solution to capture at least part of these dynamics is to define "time-slices" (divided through meaningful caesurae in the development of the object of research, as defined by the researcher knowing the material) and to model distinct networks for each of them (see below the example of the Byzantine elite families marriage network for two time slices)[14].

Even for the largest historical case studies with thousands of documents, we know for sure that our information is not complete. Written sources provide only a certain part of the spectrum of social relations for a limited group. As for any other historical study, the researcher must be sure that the data basis is sufficient "to demonstrate general structures and developments"[15]. In the case of network analysis this means that significant and characteristic patterns can

---

D. J. WATTS, *Small Worlds. The Dynamics of Networks between Order and Randomness*, Princeton–Oxford 1999.

12. PRELL, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 4), 168-170.

13. NEWMAN, *Networks* (as in footnote 6), 243-261; FUHSE, *Soziale Netzwerke* (as in footnote 8), 103-105.

14. DE NOOY, MRVAR and BATAGELJ, *Exploratory Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 6), 92-95; LEMERCIER, Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse (as in footnote 3), 28-29; V. BATAGELJ, P. DOREIAN, A. FERLIGOJ and N. KEJŽAR, *Understanding Large Temporal Networks and Spatial Networks. Exploration, Pattern Searching, Visualization and Network Evolution*, Chichester 2014.

15. M. BURKHARDT, *Der hansische Bergenhandel im Spätmittelalter: Handel–Kaufleute–Netzwerke*, Vienna–Cologne 2009. Cf. also B. H. ERICKSON, Social Networks and History: A Review Essay, *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 30/3 (1997), 149-157; E. JULLIEN, Netzwerkanalyse in der Mediävistik. Probleme und Perspektiven im Umgang mit mittelalterlichen Quellen, *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 100/2 (2013), 135-153.

be reconstructed, especially for those types of relationships (kinship, allegiance, economic interaction, etc.), which are essential for the problem in hand. Wolfgang Reinhard, the pioneer of historical network research in Germany, was quite optimistic in this respect: "The selection (of relationship types) in the sources is based on certain rules, for which the values and norms of the historical society were of crucial importance from which the sources originate"[16]. In any cases, the systematic collection and presentation of the relations recorded in a stock of sources allows us to discover the big gaps (such as missing evidence for women, see below), but also areas of denser evidence, which offer themselves for further structural analysis. On this basis, the actual complexity of social formations of the past and their dynamics become accessible in a new way, as several studies have demonstrated also for the medieval period, especially since the 1990s[17].

16. W. REINHARD, *Freunde und Kreaturen. "Verflechtung" als Konzept zur Erforschung historischer Führungsgruppen. Römische Oligarchie um 1600*, Munich 1979. For a more pessimistic position, cf. ERICKSON, Social Networks and History (as in footnote 15); for a well-balanced middle-way, see BURKHARDT, *Der hansische Bergenhandel* (as in footnote 15).

17. See for instance: BURKHARDT, *Der hansische Bergenhandel*; R. GRAMSCH, *Das Reich als Netzwerk der Fürsten. Politische Strukturen unter dem Doppelkönigtum Friedrichs II. und Heinrichs (VII.) 1225–1235*, Ostfildern 2013; E. GRUBER, Wer regiert hier wen? Handlungsspielräume in der spätmittelalterlichen Residenzstadt Wien, in: *Mittler zwischen Herrschaft und Gemeinde. Die Rolle von Funktions- und Führungsgruppen in der mittelalterlichen Urbanisierung Zentraleuropas*, ed. by E. GRUBER, S. PILS, S. RABELER, H. WEIGL and G. ZEILINGER, Vienna 2013, 9-48; J. HABERMANN, *Verbündete Vasallen: Die Netzwerke von Grafen und Herren am Nordwestharz im Spannungsgefüge zwischen rivalisierenden Fürstgewalten (ca. 1250-1400)*, Norderstedt 2011; E. MITSIOU, Networks of Nicaea: 13th Century Socio-economic Ties, Structures and Prosopography, in: *Liquid and Multiple: Individuals and Identities in the Thirteenth-Century Aegean*, ed. by G. SAINT-GUILLAIN and D. STATHAKOPOULOS [Collège de France – CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 35], Paris 2012, 91-104; J. F. PADGETT and C. K. ANSELL, Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-1434, *The American Journal of Sociology* 98/6 (1993), 1259-1319; J. PREISER-KAPELLER, "Our in the Holy Spirit beloved Brothers and Co-Priests". A Network Analysis of the Synod and the Episcopacy in the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the Years 1379–1390, in: *Das Patriarchatsregister von Konstantinopel. Eine zentrale Quelle zur Geschichte und Kirche im späten Byzanz*, ed. by CHR. GASTGEBER, E. MITSIOU and J. PREISER-KAPELLER, [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-Histor. Kl. Denkschriften, Bd. 457. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, Phil. -Hist. Kl., 32], Vienna 2013, 107-133; N. TACKETT, *The Destruction of the Medieval Chinese Aristocracy*, Cambridge, Mass.–London 2014; U. VONRUFS, *Die politische Führungsgruppe Zürichs zur Zeit von Hans Waldmann (1450-1489). Struktur,*

For our study we use the relational structuring provided by modern software (in our case, the open source software OpenAtlas for data collection and software ORA[*] for network visualisation and network analysis[18]) not simply as instrument for the organisation of data, but as heuristic tool for the reconstruction and analysis of the relational character of social phenomena of the past. Even if fragmentary tradition does not allow the use of quantitative methods or only to a limited extent, it is worthwhile to take systematically in the focus the social connections between individuals and groups as the context of their actions. Every single actor was embedded in an abundance of relationships, which she or he had received by birth (e. g. kinship), or that she or he actively established and maintained (e. g. the membership in a literary circle). These links could be connected with different positions in more or less formalized and institutionalized systems of order (as the patron of followers or as a follower of a higher ranking patron, for instance) and could play an essential role for the identity and overall social position of an individual (e. g. the integration into networks of peers as a confirmation of the noble status). Such networks could serve as a resource (support from relatives, friends, allies, patrons), but also limit the room for manoeuvre, due to obligations as a follower of a patron, for instance[19].

II. Women in a network model of the late Byzantine elite

The basis for our study is a network model of members of the Byzantine elite and individuals interacting with them for the period 1282 to 1402. The attribution of individuals to this elite is based on specific characteristics such as access to offices and property, but also already on relations such as interaction with the emperor or mutual acknowledgement of the elite status through ties of marriage, friendship and patronage. The underlying database integrates all information on ties of kinship, marriage, friendship and support, allegiance, diplomacy and conflict between these individuals to be found in the *Proposographisches*

---

politische Networks und die sozialen Beziehungstypen Verwandtschaft, Freundschaft und Patron-Klient-Beziehung, Bern 2002. For a critical approach towards these methods, cf. K. HITZBLECK and K. HÜBNER, *Die Grenzen des Netzwerks 1200-1600*, Ostfildern 2014.

18. Cf. http://www.openatlas.eu/website/ and http://www.casos.cs.cmu.edu/projects/ora/.

19. For this interpretative framework, cf. J. PREISER-KAPELLER, *Luhmann in Byzantium. A systems theory approach for historical network analysis*, working paper, online: http://oeaw.academia.edu/J.PreiserKapeller/Papers/ (with further literature).

Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit (*PLP*)[20] as well as additional information from other sources. The model in total so far includes 2,402 individuals and 336 localities (places of residence and travel or activities of commerce and pilgrimage, etc.)[21].

The number of women in this network model amounts to 349 individuals, that is a share of 14.5% of the total sample. This already illustrates a clear underrepresentation of women in the source evidence, on which the *PLP* is based. Furthermore, the density of information differs also according to the kinds of relationship as defined for the model: in the network of allegiance we only find three percent women, in the network of friendship and support six percent. Only in the network of kinship their share amounts to 31 percent, and even here women are clearly underrepresented, if we assume a more or less equal ratio of genders in the elite families. Such as in many other cases we have to reckon with many "missing women" in our sources, even in the case of the Byzantine elite.

Yet the network of kinship at least provides a sufficient density of data to compare the properties of the structural embedding of female elite members with those of male aristocrats. If we compare some network measures for female and male "nodes" (see Table 1, p. 356) we find them of equal significance for the structural cohesion of the network both with regard to the number of connections and to their "betweenness" centrality or intermediary potential (see above for these measures). A telling example in the later regard is Eirene Asanina Komnene Palaiologina (*ca.* 1260-*ca.* 1328; *PLP* 21359), a daughter of Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos and sister of Emperor Andronikos II. In 1279, she was disposed of in marriage with Ivan Asen III, who was supported by her father as candidate for the Bulgarian throne; thereby she served as "connecting node" between the two imperial houses (see pl. 7, p. 396). Already in 1280, Eirene and Ivan had to flee to Constantinople; their offspring constituted then the Byzantine branch of the Asanes-family, who was fully integrated into the Byzantine elite in the fourteenth century[22].

---

20. *PLP*, ed. by E. Trapp et al., CD-Rom Version, Vienna 2001, cf. http://hw.oeaw.ac.at/3003-1.

21. http://www.academia.edu/8247283/A_new_view_on_a_century_of_Byzantine_history_The_Vienna_Network_Model_of_the_Byzantine_Elite_1282-1402. Cf. also J. Preiser-Kapeller, Calculating the Middle Ages? The Project "Complexities and Networks in the Medieval Mediterranean and the Near East, *Medieval Worlds* 2/2015: "Empires in Decay", 100-127.

22. Cf. also K. Kubina, Manuel Philes and the Asan Family. Two Inedited Poems and their Context in Philes' œuvre, *JÖB* 63 (2013), 177-198, with further literature.

Another interesting feature of the kinship network relevant for both female and male "nodes" is the inequality between nodes regarding the mean respectively median number of connections; only 25 percent of nodes have more than four respectively five links in the network, while we find nodes with 18 respectively even 55 links at the top (see Table 1). This may partly reflect also inequalities in the density of source evidence, but has also been identified as a general characteristic of larger complex social networks. It hints at the underlying inequalities of resources and status even within the Byzantine elite[23].

Table 1: Network measure for nodes in the kinship network of the Byzantine elite (1282-1402)

Kinship (largest component)	All nodes	Female nodes	Male nodes	ratio fm/m
Min number of connections	1	1	1	1.00
Max number of connections	55	18	55	0.33
Mean number of connections	3.51	3.21	3.67	0.87
Median number of connections	2	2	2	1.00
25 prcntil connections	1	1	1	1.00
75 prcntil connections	5	4	5	0.80
Mean betweenness	0.015	0.012	0.015	0.80
Median betweenness	0.007	0.007	0.007	1.00

III. The spatial extent of elite networks in comparison

Another factor, which distinguishes individuals from one to another is the spatial range of their web of connections. Space "implies a cost associated to distance and the formation [and maintenance] of long distance links must be justified for a "good economical" reason, as the physicist Marc Barthélemy points out in his systematic paper on the mathematical background of "spatial networks"[24].

23. NEWMAN, *Networks* (as in footnote 6), 243-261; FUHSE, *Soziale Netzwerke* (as in footnote 8), 103-105.

24. M. BARTHÉLEMY, Spatial Networks, *Physics Reports* 499 (2011), 1-101, here at 32.

This is even true for modern-day networks, when media of telecommunication allow for an interaction between distanced nodes at basically no cost; still, at least 40% of emails are sent within the same city. Spatial proximity, in turn, can act as one "catalyser" for the emergence of relational ties[25]. Even more so under pre-modern conditions, many individuals were embedded in spatially limited networks of kinship and neighbourhood. Members of the elite, on the contrast, had the means and impetus to establish highly selective and over-regional contacts for various political, familial or economic occasions[26]. Such disentanglements from local interaction networks also characterized other members of a society such as higher clergymen or merchants[27]. On the basis of the Paston Letters collection from fifteenth century England, Alexander Bergs developed a scheme for the differentiation in the size, density, multiplexity and cohesion of social networks with regard to variables such as gender, education, place of living (urban, rural) or status[28]. From the point of view of relational sociology, one should not only ask how attributes of identities correlate with quantitative and qualitative characteristics of social networks, but also how these characteristics contribute to the emergence of specific identities. The partial disentanglement of elite members from close-knit local networks sets free capacities for far-reaching relationships of other qualities and of higher numbers, which in turn accounted for an "elite" identity. Aristocrats distinguished themselves through the number and variety of their relationships (of authority, allegiance, friendship, commercial partnership, cultural exchange, etc.) and their interaction with peers at the court, for instance (as bishops did in their joint meetings with other hierarchs)[29].

---

25. *Ibidem*, 23-24.

26. N. LUHMANN, Interaktion in Oberschichten: Zur Transformation ihrer Semantik im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, in: IDEM, *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik. Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft*, vol. 1, Frankfurt am Main 1993, 72-161. Cf. also GRAMSCH, *Das Reich als Netzwerk der Fürsten* (as in footnote 17); HABERMANN, *Verbündete Vasallen* (as in footnote 17).

27. LUHMANN, Interaktion in Oberschichten (as in footnote 26); PREISER-KAPELLER, *Luhmann in Byzantium* (as in footnote 19). Cf. M. GRANOVETTER, The Strength of Weak Ties, *American Journal of Sociology* 78 (1973), 1360-1380.

28. A. BERGS, *Social Networks and Historical Sociolinguistics. Studies in the Morpho-syntactic Variation in the Paston Letters (1421-1503)*, Berlin-New York 2005, 59; PREISER-KAPELLER, *Luhmann in Byzantium* (as in footnote 19).

29. Cf. for instance K.-P. MATSCHKE and F. TINNEFELD, *Die Gesellschaft im späten*

The integration of data on places of residence or of destination of elite members into our network model also allows us to compare the spatial extent of the activities of female and male "nodes" (see Table 2, p. 359); again, we observe more or less equal values in the average and median distances between places where elite members were active–but also significant differences in the number of places of activity and its maximum spatial extent.

A telling example in this regard is Theodora Raoulaina Palaiologina Komnene Kantakouzene (fl. 1256-1300; *PLP* 10943), a daughter of Ioannes Kantakouzenos and Eirene Komnene Palaiologina and niece of Emperor Michael VIII (see pl. 8, p. 397). Part of her mobility beyond Constantinople was involuntary, since due to her opposition to the Union of Lyons 1274 she was exiled to the fortress of Hagios Gregorios at the Gulf of Nikomedeia at imperial order. Theodora was allowed to return to the capital during the reign of her cousin Andronikos II, but undertook further travelling now in support of the emperor; in 1284, she participated in the Synod of Adramyttion in Western Asia Minor, which brought about a partial reconciliation with the Arsenite faction. In 1296, Theodora was sent by Andronikos II as intermediator to Alexios Tarchaneiotes Philanthropenos (*PLP* 29752), who planned an uprising in Western Asia Minor. Theodora's mobility in her ego-network was augmented by the mobility of her daughters Anna Palaiologina Kantakouzene (fl. 1264-*ca.* 1313; *PLP* 10933), who married Nikephoros I Doukas Komnenos Angelos, Despot of Epiros, and then ruled for her sons in Thessaly and in Epiros, and Maria (fl. 1259-*ca.* 1293; *PLP* 16910),.who in 1268/1269 married Konstantin Tich and became Tsarina of Bulgaria (until 1279). Also in comparison with other female members of the Byzantine elite, Theodora, Anna and Maria led particularly eventful and "mobile" lives; yet if we look on a map (see pl. 9, p. 398), we find this mobility "confined" to the core of the former "Byzantine sphere" in western Asia Minor and in the Balkans. The mobility of male elite members in the ego-network of Theodora, on the contrast, ranged to the Mongol capital of Tabriz in Iran in the East (visited by Nikephoros Chumnos in 1272/1275; *PLP* 30961), and Venice in the west (a destination of Manuel Planudes in 1297; *PLP* 23308) (see pl. 10, p. 399). The example of Theodora's ego-network thus confirms the general pattern in the network model if we compare male with female mobility.

Byzanz. Gruppen, Strukturen und Lebensformen, Cologne-Weimar-Vienna 2001. Cf. also PREISER-KAPELLER, *Luhmann in Byzantium* (as in footnote 19).

Table 2: Measures for the networks of connections between localities due to the mobility of members of the Byzantine elite (1282-1402)

Networks of localities	total network	localities female network	localities male network	ratio fm/m
Av. number of connections	13.19	6.16	22.75	0.27
Median number of connect.	7.00	5.00	8.00	0.63
Max. distance betw. loc. (km)	3416.64	2391.00	3416.64	0.70
Av. distance betw. loc. (km)	608.23	601.78	602.61	1.00
Median distance betw. loc. (km)	381.26	378.14	378.26	1.00
25 prcntil distance (km)	189.35	202.04	186.50	1.08
75 prcntil distance (km)	894.36	770.63	882.48	0.87

IV. The network of marriage between elite clans

A final example leads us back to connections of kinship; based on this data, we extracted two network models for the connections between leading clans of the Byzantine elite through ties of marriage for the periods of 1258-1328 (with 21 families) and 1390-1453 (with 15 families); in both periods, we focused on the core of this network with families connected to the imperial dynasty of the Palaiologoi[30].

30. For a comparable, now classic study on elite family networks in fifteenth century Florence, see PADGETT and ANSELL, Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici (as in footnote 17). For an analysis of the marriage network of leading families in late medieval Vienna, see GRUBER, Wer regiert hier wen (as in footnote 17); for late medieval Germany, see R. GRAMSCH, Politische als soziale Grenzen? "Nationale" und "transnationale" Heiratsnetze des deutschen Hochadels im Hochmittelalter, in: *Faktum und Konstrukt. Politische Grenzen im europäischen Mittelalter. Verdichtung - Symbolisierung - Reflexion*, ed. by N. BOCK, G. JOSTKLEIGREWE and B. WALTER, Münster 2011, 27-42.

The central position of the Palaiologoi in the first as well as in the last decades of their rule becomes visible (see pls 11 and 12, p. 400 and 401), whereas other families enlarged or lost their prominent position or even disappeared entirely from the leading circles. The imperial family is compellingly in the lead with its degree-centrality (i.e. the number of marriage ties), being directly connected to 13 out 21 families (65%) in the first period and to 9 out of 15 families (64%) in the second period (see Table 3, p. 361 and Table 4, p. 362). An impressive increase can be observed for the betweenness-centrality of the Palaiologoi-node, which indicates its importance in bridging connection between other nodes (see above). For the imperial family, the betweenness-value for the period 1258-1328 is 0.41, for the period 1390-1453 it is 0.68 (see Table 3 and Table 4); this means that in the later period relatively more families depended exclusively on their ties to the imperial house alone for their belonging to the core elite marriage network. At the same time, one can observe a changing and shrinking core group of families in both networks, which is connected to the imperial house as well as to each other, and families at the periphery of the network, which depend on one of the leading clans for their connection to this circle. It becomes evident how the marriage network at the same time conserved structural similarities and significantly changed during the decades of crisis in the fourteenth century, during which some families could preserve their status and others could not.

The decline of some leading houses increased the relative importance of the Palaeologian clan for the cohesion of the aristocratic elite, of which some members had tried to compete with the imperial house for the power (insurrection of Alexios Philanthropenos, civil war with John Kantakouzenos) in the earlier period, whereas the infighting for power in the later period took place only between members of the Palaiologos family[31]. For the earlier period, we also observe potential for polarisation and fragmentation in the marriage network if we apply the above mentioned tools for the detection of communities or clusters; the Newman-algorithm identifies three different cluster in the elite families marriage network in the period 1258-1328 (see pl. 11 , p. 400), reflecting potential fault lines in an elite in which the Palaiologoi where just establishing themselves as leading clan[32].

31. Cf. MATSCHKE and TINNEFELD, *Die Gesellschaft im späten Byzanz* (as in footnote 29), 18-32, 158-220.

32. See also J. PREISER-KAPELLER, Complex Historical Dynamics of Crisis: The Case of Byzantium, in: *Krise und Transformation*, ed. by S. JALKOTZY-DEGER and A. SUPPAN, Vienna 2012, 69-127; J. PREISER-KAPELLER, The Ties that do not Bind. Group Formation,

Table 3: Network measures for elite families in the network of marriage, 1258-1328

Elite family	Betweenness centrality	Degree centrality
Palaiologos	0.40745616	13.0
Tarchaneiotes	0.24105263	8.0
Angelos	0.16228071	6.0
Kantakouzenos	0.15131578	8.0
Metochites	0.11105263	4.0
Tornikes	0.10903509	5.0
Raoul	0.048947364	6.0
Philanthropenos	0.03824562	5.0
Laskaris	0.014035088	4.0
Kaballarios	0.009210526	3.0
Asanes	0.008245614	4.0
Tzamplakon	0.002631579	3.0
Synadenos	0.001754386	3.0
Chumnos	0.0	2.0
Syrgiannes	0.0	2.0
Branas	0.0	1.0
Glabas	0.0	1.0
Sarantenos	0.0	1.0
Meliteniotes	0.0	1.0
Akropolites	0.0	1.0
Muzalon	0.0	1.0

Polarisation and Conflict Within Networks of Political Elites in the Medieval Roman Empire, in: *The Ties That Bind. Ancient Politics and Social Network Analysis Network Analysis and Ancient Politics*, ed. by W. BROEKAERT et AL., Gent 2019 (forthcoming).

Table 4: Network measures for elite families in the network of marriage, 1390-1453

Elite family	Betweenness centrality	Degree centrality
Palaiologos	0.6794872	9.0
Laskaris	0.21794872	4.0
Philanthropenos	0.15750916	4.0
Branas	0.14285715	2.0
Asanes	0.11355311	5.0
Kantakouzenos	0.075091586	4.0
Raoul	0.04761905	4.0
Metochites	0.016483517	2.0
Goudeles	0.0	2.0
Leontares	0.0	1.0
Notaras	0.0	1.0
Tarchaneiotes	0.0	1.0
Sebastopoulos	0.0	1.0
Iagaris	0.0	1.0
Synadenos	0.0	1.0

Conclusion

Already in 1982, Alexander Kazhdan and Giles Constable highlighted benefits of a quantitative approach to social phenomena of Byzantine history: "(...) despite its many limitations and restrictions, statistical evidence provides better, clearer, and more reliable conclusions than the accumulation of occasional and separate examples"[33]. Our sample of at least 349 female members of the Byzantine elite allows us both to quantify the distortional perspective of our sources in comparison with the "male share" of data and to compare structural and quantitative properties of female and male networks in those cases where data despite these distortions is sufficient. But Kazhdan and Constable also made clear: "numbers exert a magic spell on human minds, particularly if they are presented with the help of computers. (...) Scholars must crosscheck statistical

33. A. KAZHDAN and G. CONSTABLE, *People and Power in Byzantium. An Introduction to Modern Byzantine Studies*, Washington, D.C. 1982, 177.

results lest they be deceived by the apparent persuasiveness of statistics. It is necessary to grasp the social or historical sense of the numbers and to ascertain whether this sense coincides with conclusions drawn from other sources of information"[34].

Clifton Amsbury equally stated in 1979: "a system is a set of relationships in action. Structure is the relationships; process is the actions. If you do not assess both, you are not studying anything; you are merely collecting antiquarian data, which is interesting but not very helpful"[35]. It is evident that the emergence and reproduction of social networks has much more prerequisites than "the flourishing semantic of network suggests". A purely quantitative-structural approach to nodes and ties allows only limited access to the complex interplay between communications, interactions, relationships and identities. Therefore, the results presented in this paper in further studies should not only be augmented with further quantitative and structural analysis, but also connected with qualitative research and a close reading of sources in order to contextualise the statistical findings. At the same time, identities and communications possess a quantitative aspect – and through processes of stabilisation and formalisation patterns of relationships emerge which can be perceived also from a structural point of view ("betweenness" as an emergent structural property as well as an attribute to a "broker-identity", for instance). Thereby, network analysis can be understood not as a tool of reductionist structuralism, but as a window to the complexity and diversity of human society[36], which will continue to challenge the imaginativeness of historians, especially also of gender.

34. *Ibidem*, 177.

35. C. Amsbury, Patron-Client Structure in Modern World Organization, in: *Political Anthropology. The State of the Art*, ed. by S. L Seaton and H. M. J. Claessen, The Hague 1979, 79-108, here at 82.

36. Cf. also J. L. Gaddis, *The Landscape of History. How Historians Map the Past*, New York 2002.

Ekaterini Mitsiou*

Female Monastic Space and Patronage in Late Byzantine Constantinople

Introduction

Foundation and patronage in Byzantium have attracted much attention in modern scholarship. A large number of studies, articles and conferences have been dedicated to these phenomena[1]. Nevertheless, various aspects remain to

* Göttingen Academy of Sciences and Humanities/Austrian Academy of Sciences. This paper was finalised within the framework of the Wittgenstein-Prize Project "Mobility, Microstructures and Personal Agency in Byzantium" (headed by Prof. Claudia Rapp, Vienna: http://rapp.univie.ac.at/).

1. See for example, I. Konidares, *Τὸ δίκαιον τῆς μοναστηριακῆς περιουσίας ἀπὸ τοῦ 9ου μέχρι καὶ τοῦ 12ου αἰῶνος*, Athens 1979, 16 and 101; Idem, *Νομική θεώρηση των μοναστηριακών τυπικών*, Athens 1984; J. Zhishman, *Das Stifterrecht (Τὸ κτητορικὸν δίκαιον) in der morgenländischen Kirche*, Vienna 1888; J. P. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* [DOS 24], Washington, D.C. 1987; E. Herman, Ricerche sulle istituzioni monastiche byzantine. Typika ktetorika, caristicari e monasteri liberi, *OCP* 6 (1940), 293-375; P. de Meester, Les typiques de fondation (τυπικὰ κτητορικά), *SBN* 6 (1940) = *Atti del V Congresso internazionale di studi bizantini*, 489-508; W. Nissen, *Die Regelung des Klosterwesens im Rhomäerreiche bis zum Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg 1897; H.-G. Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* [Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, Abt. 12: Byzantinisches Handbuch, Teil 2, Bd. 1], Munich 1959, repr. 1977, 130; R. Janin, Le monachisme byzantine au Moyen Age. Commende et typika (Xe-XIV siècles), *RÉB* 22 (1964), 5-44; N. Oikonomides, Patronage in Palaiologan Mt Athos, in: *Mount Athos and Byzantine Monasticism. Papers from the Twenty-eighth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, March 1994*, ed. by A. Bryer and M. Cunningham [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 4], Aldershot 1996, 99-111; *Stiftung und Staat im Mittelalter: Eine byzantinisch-lateineuropäische Quellenanthologie in komparatistischer Perspektive* [Stiftungsgeschichten 6], ed. by T. Geelhaar and J. Thomas, Berlin 2011; D. Stathakopoulos, I seek not my own. Is There a Female Mode of Charity and Patronage?, in: *Female Founders in Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. by L. Theis, M. Mullett,

be explored, and even the terminology can be ambiguous. Margaret Mullett has argued that while in Greek the word *κτήτωρ* can mean both patron and founder, in English a distinction is made where, "....founders are monks and patrons are secular, or at least secular becoming monastic"[2]. However, there are exceptions to this general rule.

Most recent views regard the foundation as a form of patronage[3], that is, as an expression of power and as a representation of unequal relations. Foundation is firmly connected to imperial philanthropy[4]. Emperors and empresses are known to have supported any building activity that served political and dynastic aims. On the other hand, the desire of the aristocrats to imitate imperial philanthropy and to gain prestige played a significant role in encouraging aristocratic foundations. As inscriptions and donors' portraits attest, local elites, as well as priests, monks, nuns and simple peasants participated in the restoration and foundation of churches in their villages[5].

M. GRÜNBART, G. FINGAROVA and M. SAVAGE [Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte 60/61], Vienna-Cologne-Weimar 2011/2012, 383-397; T. KAMBOUROVA, Le don de l'Église – une affaire couple?, in: *Female Founders*, *op. cit.*, 213-229; H. S. ALIVISATOS, *Die kirchliche Gesetzgebung des Kaisers Justinian*, vol. I, Berlin 1913, repr. Aalen 1973, 98-112; CH. A. FRAZEE, Late Roman and Byzantine Legislation on the Monastic Life from the Fourth to the Eighth Centuries, *Church History* 51 (1982), 263-279. The most important conferences related to this subject are: *Women and Byzantine Monasticism. Proceedings of the Athens Symposium, 28-29 March 1988*, ed. by J. Y. PERREAULT, E. KOUBENA and M. TOLI [Publications of the Canadian Archaeological Institute at Athens 1], Athens 1991; *Γυναίκα στο Βυζάντιο. Λατρεία και τέχνη*, ed. by M. PANAYIOTIDI-KESISOGLOU, Athens 2012 and the proceedings volume ed. by M. MULLETT, *Founders and Refounders of Byzantine Monasteries* [Belfast Byzantine Texts and Translations 6.3], Belfast 2007.

2. M. MULLETT, Founders, Refounders, Second Founders, Patrons, in: EADEM, *Founders and Refounders* (as in footnote 1), 1-27.

3. M. GRÜNBART, Female Founders-Das Konzept: zu Stiftungshandlungen in der byzantinischen Welt, in: *Female Founders* (as in foonote 1), 21-28; B. HILL, *Imperial Women in Byzantium 1025-1204: Power, Patronage and Ideology*, Harlow 1999, 155-161.

4. D. J. CONSTANTELOS, *Byzantine Philanthropy and Social Welfare*, New Brunswick-New Jersey 1968; IDEM, *Poverty, Society and Philanthropy in the Late Mediaeval Greek World*, New Rochelle, New York 1992.

5. SH. E. J. GERSTEL and S. KALOPISSI-VERTI, Female Church Founders: The Agency of the Village Widow in Late Byzantium, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 1), 195-212; SH. E. J. GERSTEL, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium. Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*, New York 2015.

The involvement of women in the foundation of monasteries and churches was significant. Especially in the last three Byzantine centuries, the most prestigious patrons were female members of powerful aristocratic families such as the Palaiologoi[6], Synadenoi[7], Raoul[8], Strategopouloi and Tarchaneiotes[9]. Through their actions, they tried to install landmarks in the Constantinopolitan urban setting to signify the importance of their own family.

Recently, Michael Grünbart has correctly pointed out that while founding can mean the construction of a building, it can also refer to the network of people who associated with the foundation[10]. Less attention has been given, however, to its spatial implications. As we are about to argue, foundation and patronage did not simply involve a network of people, but also a network of spatial regulations that changed previous settings. The application of modern tools and theories can help us analyse these spatial rearrangements[11]. This approach will enable the visualisation of the spatial implications of the foundation through spatial modifications.

---

6. A. Papadopulos, *Versuch einer Genealogie der Palaiologen: 1259-1453*, Munich 1938, repr. Amsterdam 1962; J.-F. Vannier, Les premiers Paléologues. Étude généalogique et prosopographique, in: J.-Cl. Cheynet and J.-F. Vannier, *Études prosopographiques* [Byzantina Sorbonensia 5], Paris 1986, 123-187; also *PLP*.

7. Chr. Hannick and G. Schmalzbauer, Die Synadenoi. Prosopographische Untersuchung zu einer byzantinischen Familie, *JÖB* 25 (1976), 125-161; A. P. Kazhdan and S. Ronchey, *L'aristocrazia bizantina dal principio dell'XI alla fine del XII secolo* [Nuovo Prisma. Collana diretta da Antonino Buttitta 3], Palermo 1997, 203 and 376; A. P. Kazhdan, Some Notes on the Byzantine Prosopography of the Ninth through the Twelfth Century, *BF* 12 (1987), 65-80, here at 72-73.

8. On the Raoul family, see St. Fassoulakis, *The Byzantine Family of Roul-Ral(l)es*, Athens 1973.

9. On the Tarchaneiotai, see I. G. Leontiades, *Die Tarchaneiotai: eine prosopographisch-sigillographische Studie* [Byzantine Texts and Studies 27], Thessalonike 1998.

10. Grünbart, Female founders-Das Konzept (as in footnote 3), 21-28.

11. See the last part of this paper below. This paper will not focus on the selection of the sites of monasteries. On this issue, see N. Bakirtzis, Locating Byzantine Monasteries: Spatial Considerations and Strategies in the Rural Landscape, in: *Experiencing Byzantium. Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Newcastle and Durham, April 2011*, ed. by Cl. Nesbitt and M. Jackson [Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies. Publications 18], Farnham 2013, 113-132; M. Kaplan, Le choix du lieu saint d'après certaines sources hagiographiques byzantines, in: *Le sacré et son inscription dans l'espace à Byzance et en Occident*, ed. by Idem [Byzantina Sorbonensia 18], Paris 2001, 183-198.

Founding and re-founding in Constantinople after 1261[12]

The religious landscape of Constantinople changed significantly after 1204; Orthodox churches were taken over by western monastic orders[13], which also constructed new buildings. After 1261, Byzantine sources such as the eulogy of Gregory of Cyprus on Michael VIII painted a picture of devastation and ruin for the Latin phase of the city[14]. Nikephoros Gregoras emphasised the indifference of the Latins towards the buildings destroyed by fire during their invasion[15]. In his eyes, the city only returned to life with the recovery of Constantinople by Michael VIII[16]. George Pachymeres puts forward a more moderate view[17].

12. R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin. Première partie: Le siège de Constantinople et le Patriarcat œcuménique.* III, *Les églises et les monastères*, Paris ²1969; V. Kidonopoulos, *Bauten in Konstantinopel 1204-1328: Verfall und Zerstörung, Restaurierung, Umbau und Neubau von Profan- und Sakralbauten* [Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik 1], Wiesbaden 1994; A.-M. Talbot, Monasticism in Constantinople in the Final Decades of the Byzantine Empire, in: *550th Anniversary of the Istanbul University. International Byzantine and Ottoman Symposium (XVth Century), 30-31 May 2003*, ed. by S. Atasoy, Istanbul 2004, 295-308; T. Kiousopoulou, Η γεωγραφία των βυζαντινών μοναστηριών, in: *Ψηφίδες. Μελέτες Ιστορίας, Αρχαιολογίας και Τέχνης στη μνήμη της Στέλλας Παπαδάκη-Oekland*, ed. by O. Gratziou and Chr. Loukos, Herakleion 2009, 95-106; D. K. Agoritsas, *Κωνσταντινούπολη. Η πόλη και η κοινωνία της στα χρόνια των πρώτων Παλαιολόγων (1261-1328)* [Byzantine Texts and Studies 62], Thessaloniki 2016, 63-134.

13. E. Mitsiou, Die Netzwerke einer kulturellen Begegnung: byzantinische und lateinische Klöster in Konstantinopel im 13. und 14. Jh., in: *Abrahams Erbe. Konkurrenz, Konflikt und Koexistenz der Religionen im europäischen Mittelalter*, ed. by K. Oschema, L. Lieb and J. Heil [Das Mittelalter. Beihefte 2], Berlin 2015, 359-372; N. I. Tsougarakis, *The Latin Religious Orders in Medieval Greece, 1204-1500* [Medieval Church Studies 18], Turnhout 2012.

14. Gregory of Cyprus, *Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα κυρὸν Μιχαὴλ Παλαιολόγον καὶ Νέον Κωνσταντῖνον*, ed. J. F. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca e codicibus regiis*, vol. I, Paris 1829, 313-358 and *PG* 142, cols 345-386, here at 344-345.

15. Nikephoros Gregoras, *Ῥωμαϊκὴ ἱστορία* (ed. L. Schopen, *Nicephori Gregorae Byzantina Historia* [CSHB], vols I-III, Bonn 1829-1855 (= Gregoras, *Roman History*), vol. I, 87.22-88.16.

16. *Ibidem*, vol. I, 126.21-23: *ἐὰν γὰρ ἐπίωσιν οἱ πολέμιοι, πολλαχῇ τῆς Κωνσταντινουπόλεως ἔτι διερρηγμένης καὶ ἄρτι ἀνοικιζομένης καὶ οἷον εἰπεῖν ἀναβιωσκούσης ἐκ τῶν πρὸ βραχέος θανάτων.*

17. George Pachymeres, *Συγγραφικαὶ Ἱστορίαι* (ed. A. Failler, *Georges Pachymérès, Relations Historiques* [CFHB 24/1-5], vols I-V, Paris 1984-2000 = Pachymeres, *History*),

Generally, the more negative picture in some Byzantine sources should be treated with caution, since there were districts, such as the Venetian district, where the buildings remained in good condition throughout[18].

The attested effort of the Palaiologoi to "reoccupy" the space in Constantinople after 1261 and to make it once more their own had already begun under Michael VIII, the "New Constantine"[19]. The programme involved a statue of the emperor holding the Church of Saint Sophia, as well as the construction of churches (Theotokos Nikopoios) and monasteries such as St Demetrius, St George of Mangana and Peribleptos. He also ensured that abandoned houses could be taken over by the Byzantines[20]. His successor, Andronikos II carried

II.30: vol. I, 215.11-17. For the traditional view see Agoritsas, *Κωνσταντινούπολη* (as in footnote 12), 66-67.

18. D. Jacoby, The Urban Evolution of Latin Constantinople (1204-1261), in: *Byzantine Constantinople. Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. by N. Necipoglu [The Medieval Mediterranean 33], Leiden–Boston–Cologne 2001, 277-297, with all the relevant bibliography.

19. R. Macrides, The New Constantine and the New Constantinople – 1261?, *BMGS* 6 (1980), 13-41; D. Angelov, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium (1204-1330)*, Cambridge 2007, 44-45. The restoration programme of Michael VIII offered an additional reason for him to take the distinctive name of New Constantine, see E. Kountoura Galaki, Ο Μέγας Κωνσταντίνος στο αγιολογικό έργο του Κωνσταντίνου Ακροπολίτη: Ιδεολογικές επαναλήψεις και νέες προσεγγίσεις, in: *Aureus, Τόμος αφιερωμένος στον καθηγητή Ευάγγελο Κ. Χρυσό*, ed. by T. G. Kolias and K. G. Pitsakis, Athens 2014, 417-441, here at 425-427.

20. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 88.15-16: *καὶ τὰς κεκενωμένας οἰκίας ἀνθρώπων πληροῦν*. On the restoration programme by Michael VIII, see *Typikon* of the Monastery of St Demetrios in Constantinople, ed. H. Grégoire, Imperatoris Michaelis Palaeologi de vita sua, *Byz.* 29-30 (1959-1960), 447-476, here 463; Engl. transl. by G. Dennis, Kellibara I: Typikon of Michael VIII Palaiologos for the Monastery of St Demetrios of the Palaiologoi-Kellibara in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 2, no. 38, 1237-1253; Manuel Holobolos, Ἐγκώμιον, ed. X. A. Siderides, Μανουὴλ Ὁλοβώλου, Ἐγκώμιον εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Μιχαὴλ Π' τὸν Παλαιολόγον, *ΕΕΒΣ* 3 (1926), 168-191, here 185; Manuel Holobolos, *Τοῦ σοφωτάτου καὶ ῥητορικωτάτου ῥήτορος τῶν ῥητόρων κυροῦ Μανουὴλ τοῦ Ὁλοβώλου Λόγος εἰς τὸν κρατιστὸν καὶ αὐθέντην καὶ βασιλέα κυρὸν Μιχαὴλ τὸν Παλαιολόγον καὶ Νέον Κωνσταντῖνον κατὰ τὴν ἑορτὴν ἀναγναοθεὶς τῆς Χριστοῦ γεννήσεως*, Λόγος II (ed. M. Treu, *Manuelis Holoboli Orationes* [Programm des königlichen Victoria Gymnasiums zu Potsdam 2], Potsdam 1906-1907, vol. II, 51-77), esp. 55.22-31; L. Pervialr, Un Panegirico inedito per Michele VIII Paleologo, *BZ* 42 (1943/49), 1-49 (text 15-45), here 29.1-20; Gregory of Cyprus, *Ἐγκώμιον* (as in footnote 14), 348-350; A.-M. Talbot, The Restoration of Constantinople under Michael VIII, *DOP* 47 (1993), 243-261.

out repair work on the city walls, the Holy Apostles Church, Saint Sophia and St Paul at the Eugenios Gate[21].

Female aristocratic initiative was also fundamental and indeed welcomed, especially in periods of crisis. Women from the upper aristocracy invested money and effort on restoration and foundation. According to Vassilios Kidonopoulos and Alice-Mary Talbot, of the newly founded monasteries in Constantinople between 1261 and 1328, twelve of them, that is one-third, were founded by women. If we focus on the period between 1282 and 1328, nine of the twenty-two restored monasteries had female patrons, and women established four of the ten newly constructed monasteries[22].

The Kyra Martha monastery was one of the most important Palaiologan foundations[23]. It was erected at the end of the thirteenth century by Martha Tarchaneiotissa (*PLP* 21389), the ardent Arsenite sister of emperor Michael VIII. Although it was one of the biggest nunneries in Constantinople, its location is a matter of dispute. While R. Janin placed it near Lips monastery and south of the Church of the Holy Apostles, Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger identifies it with Bayezit Aga Camii[24]. The monastery survived throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. A document dated to 1360 mentions illegal donations made by a Bryennissa to Kyra Martha[25], as well as problems with the use of

21. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 275.5-7.

22. A.-M. Talbot, Building Activity in Constantinople under Andronikos II: The Role of Women Patrons in the Construction and Restoration of Monasteries, in: *Byzantine Constantinople* (as in footnote 18), 329-343; Kidonopoulos, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 232-242; Idem, The Urban Physiognomy of Constantinople from the Latin Conquest through the Palaiologan Era, in: *Byzantium, Faith, and Power (1261-1557): Perspectives on Late Byzantine Art*, ed. by S. T. Brooks, New York 2007, 98-117, here at 101-105.

23. For all the monasteries in Constantinople securely localised, see Kidonopoulos, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 288-289 (map 2).

24. V. Laurent, Kyra Martha. Essai de topographie et de prosopographie byzantine, *ÉO* 38 (1939), 296-320; Janin, *Le siège de Constantinople* (as in footnote 12), 325-326; A.-M. T[albot], s.v., *ODB*, vol. II, 1163; A. Effenberger, Zu den Eltern der Maria Dukaina Komnene Branaina Tarchaneiotissa, *JÖB* 57 (2007), 169-182; Idem, Die Klöster der beiden Kyra Martha und die Kirche des Bebaia Elpis Klosters in Konstantinopel, *Millennium* 3 (2006), 255-293; N. Asutay-Effenberger, *Die Landmauer von Konstantinopel-Istanbul. Historisch-topographische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchungen* [Millennium Studies 18], Berlin 2007, 211-212.

25. *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel*. 3. Teil: *Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1350-1363*, eds J. Koder, M. Hinterberger and O. Kresten [CFHB 19/3], Vienna 2001 (= *PRK* III), no. 218 (1360), 256.81-84.

a building. In 1402, a priest promised that he would never again stay in the nunnery[26]. The Palaiologos and Kantakouzenos families kept their ties with the nunnery[27]. Around 1392, Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina (1333-1397; *PLP* 21365), the wife of emperor John V Palaiologos (r. 1354-1391)[28] entered this nunnery under the name of Hypomone. In celebration of her entrance into Kyra Martha, Demetrios Kydones sent a letter to the empress[29]. According to the Ottoman survey of 1455, the monastery of "Kir Marthas" comprised 12 houses and wineries in its courtyard[30].

In the late thirteenth-early fourteenth century, Maria Palaiologina (*PLP* 21395), the half-sister of Andronikos II Palaiologos (1282-1328), founded the monastery *τῆς Παναγιωτίσσης* (today Kanli Kilise)[31]. After 1282, she bought

---

26. Fr. Miklosich and I. Müller, *Acta et Diplomata Graeca Medii Aevi Sacra et Profana*, vols 1-6, Vienna 1860-1890, repr. Athens 1996, here vol. 2, no. 687 (January 1402), 570; J. Darrouzès, *Les regestes des Actes du patriarcat de Constantinople.* Vol. I: *Les actes des patriarches. Fasc. 5/6/7. Les regestes de 1310 à 1376/1377 à 1410/1410 à 1453*, Paris 1977-1991, no. 3253.

27. Stephen of Novgorod, in: G. P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* [DOS 19], Washington, D.C. 1984, 306-309; Laurent, *Kyra Martha* (as in footnote 24), 296-320.

28. D. M. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos ca. 1100-1460. A Genealogical and Prosopographical Study*, Washington, D. C. 1968, 135-138; cf. A. Angelou, *Manuel Palaiologos. Dialogue with the Empress-Mother on Marriage. Introduction, Text, and Translation* [Byzantina Vindobonensia 19], Vienna 1991, 39-40.

29. Demetrios Kydones, *Τῇ βασιλίδι Ἑλένῃ* (ed. R.-J. Loenertz, *Démétrius Cydonès, Correspondance*, vols I-II [Studi e Testi 186 and 208], Città del Vaticano 1956-1960), vol. II, no. 222,103-110.

30. H. İnalcık, *The Survey of Istanbul 1455: The Text, English Translation, Analysis of the Text, Documents* [İnalcık, Halil, 1916-2016. Works. Selections 6], İstanbul 2012, 323 and 493. On this survey, see also Idem, The Ottoman Survey of Istanbul 1455, 1453, İstanbul kültür ve sanat dergisi (Journal of İstanbul's Culture and Art) 3 (2008), 19-27; Idem, The Ottoman Survey of Istanbul 1455 and the Conqueror's Istanbul, in: *550. Yılında Fetih ve İstanbul Bildiriler (= The Conquest and Istanbul in 550th Anniversary)*, Istanbul 2007, 1-14.

31. *PRK* III, no. 184 (October 1351), 68.31-37; P. Schreiner, Die topographische Notiz über Konstantinopel in der Pariser Suda-Handschrift: eine Neuinterpretation, in: *AETOΣ. Studies in Honour of Cyril Mango Presented to him on April 14, 1998*, ed. by I. Ševčenko and I. Hutter, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1998, 273-283, here 381-383 on the previous faulty assumption that Mouchliotissa was constructed in 1266-1267 by Maria Akropolitissa; see also Ch. Bouras, Η αρχιτεκτονική της Παναγίας του Μουχλίου στην Κωνσταντινούπολη, *ΔΧΑΕ* 44 (2005), 35-50, here 37; G. Kaplanoğlou, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul. Cultural*

buildings and a church in the Phanari area and turned them into a monastery, the so-called Panagia *τῶν Μουγουλίων*. Following a common practice for Byzantine founders to endow monasteries with landed possessions and to guarantee their financial independence, Maria Palaiologina gave the nunnery bakeries, vineyards and sixty lease houses; altogether these provided the substantial income of 300 hyperpyra. The nunnery also obtained two villages, a manor, vineyards and houses in regions close to the city[32]. After the death of the foundress (1307), the administration of the nunnery passed to her daughter Theodora and later to her son-in-law Isaakios Palaiologos Asanes (*PLP* 1494). The nuns accused the latter in the synodic court of making decisions that were catastrophic for the convent; he allegedly destroyed some houses to use the building material for his private buildings – actually a well-known phenomenon in the Palaiologan period.

The form of the church was highly distinctive: a tetraconch ground scheme with a central dome enclosed by a tower and a narthex. The various reconstructions and changes through the centuries, however, hinder a closer examination. According to Charalampos Bouras, the tripartite narthex may have been an addition of the thirteenth century, a period when additions of narthexes and burial chapels (*παρεκκλήσια*) were frequent[33]. The only original construction of Maria Palaiologina must have been the cells for the nuns. Interestingly, the nunnery lies close to the monastery of Chora, where she is depicted as the nun Melania due to a generous donation[34]. At the same time, it is near to the imperial palace of Blachernai.

Andrew *ἐν τῇ Κρίσει* (today Koca Mustafa Pasa Camii) is still *in situ*. Its history began probably in the sixth century, as the site had been occupied since then by the monastery of *τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου πλησίον τῆς πόρτης τοῦ Σατουρνίνου*. Before 792 or 766, it was transformed into a nunnery with the name *ἡ Κρίσις*. There is no information on the monastery until the thirteenth century. Between 1282 and 1289, Theodora Raoulaina (*PLP* 10943) restored

---

Encounter, Imperial Vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman Capital, University Park, Pennsylvania 2009, 199; TALBOT, Building Activity (as in footnote 22), 334-336.

32. *PRK* III, no. 184, 38-52.

33. BOURAS, *Παναγία του Μουχλίου* (as in footnote 31), 40.

34. P. A. UNDERWOOD, *Kariye Djami*, vol. 1/1: *Historical Introduction and Description of the Mosaics and Frescoes*, New York 1966, 45-48; N. TETERIATNIKOV, The Place of the Nun Melania (the Lady of the Mongols) in the Deesis Program of the Inner Narthex of Chora, Constantinople, *CA* 43 (1995), 163-180; TALBOT, Building Activity (as in footnote 22), 335 and n. 31.

the nunnery and lived there[35]. This nunnery played a significant role in church affairs after the renouncement of the Union of Lyons. It is also the place where prominent members of the imperial family took their monastic habit. In the survey of 1455 it is mentioned as "Kızlar manasteri", comprising five houses[36].

The building was initially of the ambulatory type with an esonarthex and an exonarthex at the west side. According to Wolfgang Müller-Wiener, the church that Theodora renovated was a domed construction with three apses, while on the west there was a narthex with three domes. A cistern was to be found in the southeast of the church[37]. The nunnery had a library, which stored part of the foundress' book collection. It is located in a different area of the city, removed from the busy centre and the imperial palaces.

At some point after 1310, Maria (Martha) Doukaina Komnene Palaiologina Glabaina Tarchaneiotissa (*PLP* 27511) renovated the burial chapel of Pammakaristos (Fethiye Mosque) in which her husband, Michael Palaiologos Tarchaneiotes Glabas (*PLP* 27504), was buried[38]. She may also have founded the Glabaina nunnery in Constantinople. The latter is to be located northwest of Kyriotissa monastery (today Kalenderhane Camii)[39].

---

35. Maximos Planoudes, *Ἐπιγράμματα* (ed. S. P. Lampros, Ἐπιγράμματα Μάξιμου Πλανούδη, *NE* 13 (1916), 414-421), no. 1, 415-416: *Στίχοι εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Ἁγίου Ἀνδρέου/ ὃν ἀνήγειρεν ἡ πρωτοβεστιαρία ἡρωελεγεῖοι/Μαξίμου τοῦ Πλανούδη*; no. 2, 416-417: *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ αὐτό*; and no. 3, 417-418: *Τοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ αὐτό*. Gregoras, *Roman History*, vol. I, 167.17-21; S. Kugeas, Zur Geschichte der Münchener Thukydideshandschrift, *BZ* 16 (1907), 588-609; Kidonopoulos, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 9-10; Kafescioğlou, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul* (as in footnote 31), 225.

36. İnalcik, *The Survey of Istanbul 1455* (as in footnote 30), 317 and 491-492.

37. W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls. Byzantion-Konstantinupolis-Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Tübingen 1977, 172-173; T. Mathews, *The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul: A Photographic Survey*, University Park 1976, 4.

38. A. Effenberger, Zur Restaurierungstatigkeit des Michael Dukas Glabas Tarchaneiotes im Pammakaristoskloster und zur Erbauungszeit des Parekklesion, *Zograf* 31 (2006-2007), 79-94. Effenberger argues that the "parekklesion" chapel was built between 1302 and 1304, when Michael Tarchaneiotes was still alive, and that his wife was not the sole founder, as has been previously argued; H. Belting, C. Mango and D. Mouriki, *The Mosaics and Frescoes of St. Mary Pammakaristos (Fethiye Cami) at Istanbul* [DOS 15], Washington, D.C. 1978. On the metrical inscription in the apse, see A. Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme in inschriftlicher Überlieferung. Byzantinische Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken* [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philos.-hist. Kl. Denkschriften 374. Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 15], Vienna 2009, vol. I, 402-403.

39. Kidonopoulos, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 41-42.

The Bebaia Elpis (= Sure Hope) nunnery (*Βεβαία Ἐλπίς*) is one of the most famous female foundations of the Palaiologan period. Its foundress, Theodora (*PLP* 21381), was married into the Synadenos family, a prominent Byzantine aristocratic clan, taking the megas stratopedarches John Angelos Doukas Synadenos (*PLP* 27125) as her husband[40]. Theodora Synadene entered the convent together with her daughter Euphrosyne (*PLP* 21373), who at that point was still a child. However, her husband John/Joachim Synadenos was also honoured as its founder (*κτήτωρ*). All three are depicted as founders in the Lincoln College *Typikon* (*ca.* 1300-1345?)[41].

One illumination depicts the katholikon of Bebaia Elpis nunnery, giving us an insight into its form. The text of the *Typikon* is also very useful in this respect. The refoundation of the monastery included additions to the church, such as an exonarthex, a belfry tower and mosaics. The nunnery had cells for the nuns, a burial chapel of St Nicholas, a school and a library. The additional buildings constructed by Synadene were on properties belonging to her aristocratic "oikos"[42]. According to the most recent view, the Church of Bebaia Elpis may have been the Vefa Kilise Camii, previously identified with *Ἅγιος Θεόδωρος πλησίον τοῦ Χαλκοῦ τετραπύλου*[43]. The Vefa Kilise Camii is a tenth/eleventh-

40. HANNICK and SCHMALZBAUER, Die Synadenoi (as in footnote 7), 134-135.

41. I. HUTTER, Die Geschichte des Lincoln College Typikons, *JÖB* 45 (1995), 79-114.

42. K. SMYRLIS, *La fortune des grands monastères byzantins (fin du X^e^-milieu du XIV^e^ siècle)* [Collège de France – CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 21], Paris 2006, 37; P. MAGDALINO, Aristocratic Oikoi in the Tenth and Eleventh Regions of Constantinople, in: *Byzantine Constantinople* (as in footnote 18), 53-69 (= IDEM, *Studies on the History and Topography of Byzantine Constantinople* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2007, II); IDEM, The Byzantine Aristocratic Oikos, in: *The Byzantine Aristocracy IX to XIII Centuries*, ed. by M. ANGOLD [British Archaeological Reports. International Series 221], Oxford 1984, 92-111.

43. MÜLLER-WIENER, *Bildlexikon* (as in footnote 37), 169-171. JANIN (*Le siège de Constantinople*, as in footnote 12, 160) and others had located it south of the Tauri Forum at the Propontis, i.e., south of the Mese; see also LAURENT, Kyra Martha (as in footnote 24), 306-311; TALBOT, Building Activity (as in footnote 22), 338-339; EADEM, Bebaia Elpis: Typikon of Theodora Synadene for the Convent of the Mother of God Bebaia Elpis in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 4, no. 57, 1512-1578, here at 1512-1513 argued that "based on the description of the properties neighbouring the convent, it appears that Bebaia Elpis was located in the Heptaskalon quarter of Constantinople, in the south central part of the city. No remains have been identified". A. STAURIDOU-ZAPHRAKA, Ἡ Μονὴ Μωσελὲ καὶ ἡ Μονὴ τῶν Ἀνθεμίου. Ἱστορικὰ καὶ Τοπογραφικά, *Βυζαντινά* 12 (1983), 66-

century building, a domed church with a narthex; a cistern to the south of the church may be dated to its early phase. In the first half of the fourteenth century, an exonarthex with three domes was erected. The expanded elements in the south were used as a burial place for the "ktetores" and their families. Mosaics on these domes can still be seen, if only partially. At the same time, a portico on the south of the church was constructed, while on the southern part can be seen the remains of a rectangular room of a belfry tower[44]. The elements of Vefa Kilise Camii match the information from its *Typikon*. In 1392, both the church and the bell tower were in danger of collapsing. The repair costs paid by nun Xene Philanthropene (*PLP* 29746) amounted to 200 hyperpyra, which covered the payment of tiles, nails, plaster, skilled labour and other expenses[45].

Probably before 1320, Eirene Choumnaina (*PLP* 30936), the daughter of Nikephoros Choumnos, renovated pre-existing buildings, creating the double monastery of Philanthropos-Soter[46]. It is usually located in the complex of Mangana[47]. However, a recent study by Nicholas Melvani questions this localisation and sets the nunnery in the site of the Komnenian Kecharitomene

92 and EADEM, Τὸ Κοντοσκάλιο καὶ τὸ Ἑπτάσκαλο. Συμβολὴ στὴ μελέτη τῶν λιμανιῶν τῆς Κωνσταντινούπολης κατὰ τὴν Ὑστερη περίοδο, *Βυζαντινά* 13/2 (1985), 1303-1328, and KIDONOPOULOS, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 72 located the nunnery towards the south-east end of the aqueduct of Valens and the Zeugma. More precisely, they set it in the middle of the western slope of the third city hill, in the area previously described as the tenth (X) district. On Heptaskalon, see now J. PREISER-KAPELLER, Heptaskalon und weitere Anlegestellen am Goldenen Horn, in: *Die byzantinischen Häfen Konstantinopels*, ed. by F. DAIM [Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident 4], Mainz 2016, 99-108, esp. 101-102.

44. MÜLLER-WIENER, *Bildlexikon* (as in footnote 37), 169.

45. *Typikon* of Bebaia Elpis, ed. H. DELEHAYE, *Deux typica byzantins de l'époque des Paléologues* [Mémoires. Deuxième série, tom. 13], Brussels 1921, here ch. 159, 104-105; Engl. transl. by A.-M. TALBOT, Bebaia Elpis (as in footnote 43), 1568; EADEM, Female Patronage in the Palaiologan Era: Icons, Minor Arts and Manuscripts, in: *Female Founders* (as in footnote 1), 259-274.

46. PH. MEYER, Bruchstücke zweier τυπικά κτητορικά, *BZ* 4 (1895), 45-58, here 48-49; Engl. transl. by A.-M. TALBOT, Philanthropos: Typikon of Irene Choumnaina Palaiologina for the Convent of Christ Philanthropos in Constantinople, in: *BMFD*, vol. 3, no. 47, 1383-1388.

47. R. JANIN, Les monastères du Christ Philanthrope à Constantinople, *RÉB* 4 (1946), 135-162, 135-150; JANIN, *Le siège de Constantinople* (as in footnote 12), 527-529; KIDONOPOULOS, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 33-36; TALBOT, Building Activity (as in footnote 22), 339-340.

and Philanthropos complex[48]. In any case, it was a double monastery with a shared church and refectory[49]. The existing part of the *Typikon* mentions the last point[50]. After his death in 1327, Nikephoros Choumnos was buried in the male part of the monastery as monk Nathaniel[51].

Spatial approaches to female patronage: the case of Lips monastery

In the cases of the monasteries just discussed, issues related to spatial arrangements were briefly presented. The last part of this paper will approach foundation from a spatial perspective, tracing the impact of female patronage on pre-existing sacred spaces.

The influence of gender studies and the discussion regarding the social construction of the sexes has introduced spatial concepts into the debate. Scholars such as Alice-Mary Talbot have posed questions about gendered space in Byzantine monasteries[52]. Meanwhile, the influence of the "spatial turn" in

48. N. Melvani, The Duplication of the Double Monastery of Christ Philanthropos in Constantinople, *RÉB* 74 (2016), 361-384; see also E. Mitsiou, The Monastery of Kecharitomene and the Contribution of the Assumptionists to the Study of Female Monasticism in Byzantium, in: *L'apport des Assomptionnistes français aux études byzantines: une approche critique. Actes du colloque de Bucarest, 25-27 septembre 2014* [Archives de l'Orient Chrétien 21], ed. by M.-H. Blanchet and I.-A. Tudorie, Paris 2017, 327-344.

49. *Διδασκαλία διαλαμβάνουσα τὴν ὀφειλομένην διαγωγὴν τῶν ἐν τῷ κοινοβίῳ μοναχῶν* (ed. R. E. Sinkewicz, *Theoleptos of Philadelpheia: The Monastic Discourses. A Critical Edition, Translation and Study* [Studies and Texts 111], Toronto 1992), no. 9, 220.45-46: *ἡ περιοχὴ τῶν μονῶν μία· ὁ οἶκος τῶν ἱερῶν ὕμνων ὁ αὐτός· τῆς ἑστιάσεως ἡ τράπεζα ἡ αὐτή*; Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon* (as in footnote 37), 109; R. Demangel and E. Mamboury, *Le Quartier des Manganes et la première région de Constantinople* [Recherches Françaises en Turquie, 2e fasc.], Paris 1939, 49-68; Kidonopoulos, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 33.

50. Meyer, *Bruchstücke* (as in footnote 46), 48.33; Talbot, Philanthropos: Typikon (as in footnote 46), 1383-1388.

51. Theodoros Hyrtakenos, *Μονῳδία ἐπὶ τῷ περιποθήτῳ συμπενθέρῳ τοῦ κρατίστου καὶ ἁγίου αὐτοκράτορος ἡμῶν κυροῦ Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ Παλαιολόγου κυρῷ Νικηφόρῳ Χούμνῳ τῷ ἐπὶ τοῦ κανικλείου* (ed. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca*, as in footnote 14, vol. I, 282-292), 287; see V. Laurent, Une fondation monastique de Nicéphore Choumnos. Ἡ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει μονὴ τῆς Θεοτόκου τῆς Γοργοεπηκόου, *RÉB* 12 (1954), 32-44, here at 42-44; A. Stolfi, La Biografia di Irene-Eulogia Cumnena Paleologhina (1291-1355): Un riesame, *Cristianesimo nella storia* 20/1 (1999), 1-40, here at 10.

52. A.-M. Talbot, Women's Space in Byzantine Monasteries, *DOP* 52 (1998), 113-127 (= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life in Byzantium* [Variorum Reprints], Aldershot 2001, XV).

the humanities has introduced spatial concepts into the historical discourse. According to Henri Lefebvre[53], space is generally a social construction. Michel de Certeau made the distinction between fixed topographies and abstract or complex places. He drew the difference between "space" and "place". "Place" is a manifestation of stability. Space exists, however, as a construct as "intersections of mobile elements", such as time, movement and direction, which are defined by the society[54]. Also for Pierre Bourdieu "space" is marked through position and directions; for example, the place of doors as connectors to other rooms or the surrounding "outer room"[55].

This last point brings us to the question of how patronage transforms a space by making changes in the spatial network of connections between rooms in a building. In all the nunneries listed above, the foundation meant the addition or modification of existing buildings. In this respect, ground plans which represent space as a topographic structure in a broader landscape on an accurate scale are helpful. However, the topographical representations can be transformed into a topological network model, which allow us to understand better the actual connections of rooms via doors and axes of connectivity.

The value of such topologies for the orientation in a spatial system was demonstrated in the 1930s for the London Underground and its complex network of stations and lines; an effort to use topographical images proved confusing for the orientation of the passengers. Therefore, as in today's metro lines, a topological representation of stations and connecting lines between them was created. Although this does not represent the actual distance from one station to the next, it allows for the orientation of the passengers and their visual perception of the entire traffic network[56].

---

53. H. LEFEBVRE, *La production de l'espace*, Paris 1974; R. SHIELDS, *Love and Struggle - Spatial Dialectics*, London 1999; S. ELDEN, *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible*, London–New York 2004.

54. M. DE CERTEAU, *L'invention du Quotidien*, vol. 1: *Arts de Faire*, Paris 1980. For Michel de Certeau, see L. GIARD, *Michel de Certeau*, Paris 1987; F. DOSSE, *Michel de Certeau: Le marcheur blesse*, Paris 2002.

55. P. BOURDIEU, *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique, précédé de trois études d'ethnologie kabyle*, Paris 1972; P. BOURDIEU, *La domination masculine*, Paris 1998. On P. Bourdieu, see J. DUBOIS, P. DURAND and Y. WINKIN, *Le Symbolique et le Social. La réception internationale de la pensée de Pierre Bourdieu*, Université de Liège 2005; M. SCHWINGEL, *Pierre Bourdieu zur Einführung*, Hamburg 2011.

56. On the application of network analysis in Archaeology, see T. KOHLER, Complex Systems and Archaeology, in: *Archaeological Theory Today*, ed. by I. HODDER, Cambridge–

This kind of topological network provides for a better understanding of the "accessibility" and the symmetry of the "syntax of spaces"[57]. Each room is being represented as a node, which is connected to other nodes with a line, where the possibility of a connection exists. With the help of network software, we can create, visualise and analyse such topological models[58].

In a previous study, I have applied this method to examine these questions for an entire monastic complex, the monastery Sagmatas in Boeotia, which was founded in the twelfth century (*ca.* 1105/6)[59]. An excellent case for examining the impact of female patronage on a pre-existing sacred space is the nunnery of Lips (Fenari İsa Camii). It was a construction of the admiral Constantine Lips in 908 on ruins dated to the sixth century. At the end of the thirteenth century, it was rebuilt by Theodora (Eugenia) Palaiologina (*PLP* 21380), wife of emperor Michael VIII[60]. She added a second Church dedicated to St John Prodromos,

---

Malden ²2012, 93-123. On network theory in general, see M. E. J. Newman, A.-L. Barabási and D. J. Watts, *The Structure and Dynamics of Networks*, Princeton 2006; S. Wasserman and K. Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*, Cambridge 1994; M. Newman, *Networks. An Introduction*, Oxford 2010; Ch. Prell, *Social Network Analysis. History, Theory and Methodology*, Los Angeles–London 2012. On the terminology and concepts of Network Analysis, see also the contribution of J. Preiser-Kapeller in the present volume, 349-363.

57. B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space*, Oxford 1984.

58. *Ibidem*, 223-241 and 242-261.

59. A. K. Orlandos, Ἡ ἐν Βοιωτίᾳ μονὴ τοῦ Σαγματᾶ, *Ἀρχεῖον Βυζαντινῶν Μνημείων Ἑλλάδος* 7 (1951), 72-110; S. Bogiatzes, Παρατηρήσεις στην οικοδομική ιστορία της μονής Σαγματά στη Βοιωτία, *ΔΧΑΕ* 18 (1995), 49-70; Idem, Ο γλυπτός διάκοσμος της Μονής Σαγματά στη Βοιωτία, *ΑΔ* 51-52 (1996-1997), 303-332 (Μελέτες); Ch. Mpouras and L. Mpoura, *Η ελλαδική ναοδομία κατά τον 12ο αιώνα*, Athens 2002, 281-285; P. Lazarides, Βυζαντινά και μεσαιωνικά μνημεία Βοιωτίας, *ΑΔ* 27 (1972) (Χρονικά), 332-335; E. Mitsiou, Monastischer Raum und Raumordnung in der byzantinischen Kirche, in: *Geist und Gestalt. Monastische Raumkonzepte als Ausdrucksformen religiöser Leitideen*, ed. by J. Sonntag et al. [Vita Regularis 69], Berlin 2016, 197-218.

60. On Theodora, see A.-M. Talbot, Empress Theodora Palaiologina, Wife of Michael VIII, *DOP* 46 (1992), 295-303 [= Eadem, *Women and Religious Life* (as in footnote 52), V]; E. Mitsiou, Regaining the True Faith: the Confession of Faith of Theodora Palaiologina, in: *L'Union à l'épreuve du formulaire. Professions de foi entre Églises d'Orient et d'Occident (XIIIe-XVIIIe s.)*, ed. by M.-H. Blanchet and F. Gabriel [Collège de France – CNRS. Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance. Monographies 51], Paris 2016, 77-96. Theodora founded also the Anargyroi nunnery and the monastery *τῆς Θωμαΐδος* (previously Theotokos *Μικρὰ Ῥωμαίου*), see Constantine Akropolites, *Λόγος εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν*

which was joined to the south side of the original church aiming to serve as a mausoleum for the imperial family[61]. The nunnery was the last resting place for Theodora Palaiologina, Andronikos II (d. 1332), Constantine Palaiologos (d. 1306; *PLP* 21492) and Eirene of Brunswick (*PLP* 21356), wife of Andronikos III (1328-1341). The last recorded burial at Lips was of Anna (*PLP* 21349), the bride of John VIII Palaiologos, who died of the plague in Constantinople in 1417[62]. A fourteenth-century addition was a perambulatory (long exonarthex)

Θωμαΐδα (ed. *AASS*, Nov. IV, Brussels 1925, 242-246), here 246F; A.-M. TALBOT, Old Wine in New Bottles: The Rewriting of Saints' Lives in the Palaeologan Period, in: *The Twilight of Byzantium. Aspects of Cultural and Religious History in the Late Byzantine Empire. Papers from the Colloquium Held at Princeton University 8-9 May 1989*, ed. by S. ĆURČIĆ and D. MOURIKI, Princeton 1991, 15-26, esp. 19 [= TALBOT, *Women and Religious Life* (as in footnote 52), X]; JANIN, *Le siège de Constantinople* (as in footnote 12), 197.

61. On this monastery, see A. VAN MILLINGEN, R. TRAQUAIR, and W. GEORGE, *Byzantine Churches in Constantinople; their History and Architecture*, London 1912, 122-137; J. EBERSOLT and A. THIERS, *Les églises de Constantinople* [Monuments de l'art byzantin, publ. sous les auspices du Ministère de l'instruction publique et des beaux-arts; III)], Paris 1913, 211-213; JANIN, *Le siège de Constantinople* (as in footnote 12), 307-310 and 417-418; MATHEWS, *The Byzantine Churches* (as in footnote 37), 322-345; V. MARINIS, *The Monastery Tou Libos: Architecture, Sculpture, and Liturgical Planning in Middle and Late Byzantine Constantinople*, Ph.D. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign 2004; KAFESCIOĞLOU, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul* (as in footnote 31), 113-114; KIDONOPOULOS, *Bauten* (as in footnote 12), 86-87; İNALCIK, *The Survey of Istanbul 1455* (as in footnote 30), 320-322 and 493-494; R. OUSTERHOUT, *Master Builders of Byzantium*, Princeton, N. J. 1999, esp. 31 fig. 20; N. MELVANI, *Late Byzantine Sculpture* [Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages 6], Turnhout 2013, 88-89. On its *Typikon*, see DELEHAYE, *Deux typica* (as in footnote 45), 106-136; Engl. transl. by A.-M. TALBOT, Lips: Typikon of Theodora Palaiologina for the Convent of Lips, in: *BMFD*, vol. 3, no. 39, 1254-1286; A. GKOUTZIOUKOSTAS, Observations on the Dating of the *Typikon* of the Lips Monastery, *JÖB* 59 (2009), 79-85; T. SHAWCROSS, In the Name of the True Emperor: Politics of Resistance after the Palaiologan Usurpation, *BSl* 66 (2008), 203-229, here at 218-221; AGORITSAS, *Κωνσταντινούπολη* (as in footnote 12), 119-120.

62. T. MACRIDY, The Monastery of Lips and the Burials of the Palaeologoi, *DOP* 18 (1964), 253-278; A. H. S. MEGAW, The Original Form of the Theotokos Church of Constantine Lips, *DOP* 18 (1964), 279-298; C. MANGO and E. J. W. HAWKINS, Additional Notes on the Monastery of Lips, *DOP* 18 (1964), 299-315; C. MANGO and E. J. W. HAWKINS, Additional Finds at Fenari Isa Camii, Istanbul, *DOP* 22 (1968) 177-184; MARINIS, *The Monastery Tou Libos* (as in footnote 61), 171-199. Though praised as the New Constantine during his life, Michael VIII was refused a proper burial, see KOUNTOURA GALAKI, Ο Μέγας Κωνσταντίνος

which was built around the south and west sides to allow for additional burial sites. According to the survey of 1455, 108 houses belonged to the monastery[63].

The difference between Sagmatas and Lips is that the latter does not preserve any of the additional buildings or its circuit wall. However, as the *katholikon* of Sagmatas demonstrates, we can apply this approach also to the existing remains of the Lips complex. In the case of Sagmatas, the sanctuary together with the *prothesis* were characterised by a close clustering of rooms. The main "naos" was, however, the central connection point to the altar (*ιερόν*) and the other elements of the spatial network[64].

For this study, we concentrated on the lower level of the Lips monastery. After evaluating the different opinions and ground plans, we created a topological network of the Theotokos Church before the end of the thirteenth century (pl. 13, p. 402). The visualisation underlines the importance of the main church for the connection to the "hieron bema" and the other parts of the church. However, the topological model is far more interesting, when to the original construction we add the Church of Prodromos, which belongs to the ambulatory type (pl. 14, p. 403). The annexed building was divided into its rooms, and the connections between them and with the original church (in different colours) were drawn.

The importance of the former south chapel of the Theotokos Church, of the narthex, the southern chapel, and the ambulatory for the connectivity between the two churches is already noticeable. It can also be illustrated by calculating the **betweenness degree** (a measure which identifies nodes paramount for the connection of otherwise separate sections of the network); rooms are sized in this image according to their "betweenness" centrality within the entire complex (pl. 15, p. 404)[65].

Furthermore, I have applied a **clustering algorithm**, which identifies

(as in footnote 18), 437-441. On the efforts of Theodora Palaiologina in relation to her dead husband, see MITSIOU, Regaining the True Faith (as in footnote 60), 82-84.

63. İNALCIK, *The Survey of Istanbul 1455* (as in footnote 30), 320-322 and 493-494.

64. MITSIOU, *Monastischer Raum* (as in footnote 59), 213 and figs. 6-10. A similar attempt is a forthcoming article: EADEM, Byzantine Monastic Space: Selection, Modification and Configuration Patterns, in: *Community and Seclusion. Defining the Religious Life in the South Asian Traditions, in Buddhism, in Eastern and Western Christianity*, ed. by K. RÖSLER, Dresden 2019.

65. WASSERMANN and FAUST, *Social Network Analysis* (as in footnote 56), 188-192; PRELL, *Social Network* (as in footnote 56), 103-107.

groups of clusters of nodes (in our case: rooms) more closely connected among each other than with the rest of the spatial complex (pl. 16, p. 405)[66]. Thereby, we can identify not only two separate components in the spatial framework (the old and the new church), but actually, three clusters of connectivity in the now double church, overlapping the old and the new building. The new spatial order modified both the new and the old building and re-centred the focal points of possible movement and access in the central sacred complex of the monastery. Once more the ambulatory plays a significant role as a node connecting the three clusters (or subgroups) in this topological network.

The topological network of this complex would take a different form if we were to take into account later changes in the entrances from one church to the other one. For example, the later installation of a tomb between the Churches of St John and Theotokos meant that access between the two churches was made more difficult; axes of connectivity were again modified and accessibility further restricted.

Conclusions

Although we are unable to draw gender specific conclusions on the basis of this example alone (a systematic comparison of the space syntax of male and female monastic spaces would be necessary), we were able to visualise and interpret the changes to a monastic landscape on account of the patronage of a dowager empress in a new way. A church (or a monastery) can be understood as a dynamic spatial complex, with the addition of new elements and changes in function.

Further research on both new and restored foundations is needed before we can gain a better insight into the motives of their patrons, and in particular, whether they sought to create an open and accessible monastic complex or one where access was more restricted and controlled. "Gendered" spaces then may become more visible[67].

---

66. WASSERMANN and FAUST, *Social Network Analysis*, 254-257.

67. The only gender-influenced difference between female and male monasteries, which I could detect in the sources, is of archaeological interest: in the refectory, female and not male saints were depicted, see *Das Register des Patriarchats von Konstantinopel. 2. Teil: Edition und Übersetzung der Urkunden aus den Jahren 1337–1350*, eds H. HUNGER, O. KRESTEN, E. KISLINGER and C. CUPANE [CFHB 19/2], Vienna 1995, no. 135 (May 1341) 278.47-49. On the archaeology of gender, see R. GILCHRIST, *Gender and Material Culture. The Archaeology of Religious Women*, London–New York ²2008.